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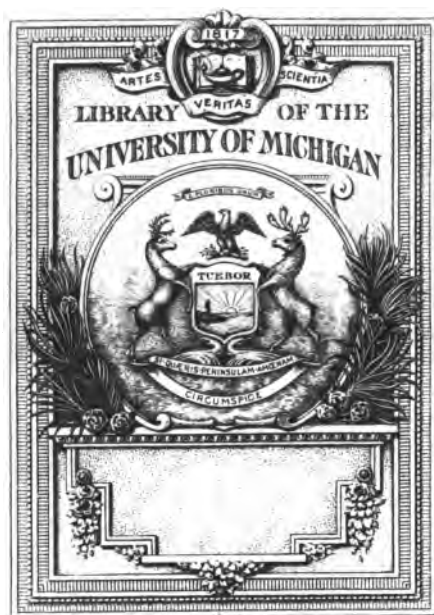


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A N T A R.

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A N T A R,
A BEDOUEEN ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC,

BY

TERRICK HAMILTON, ESQ.

**ORIENTAL SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT
CONSTANTINOPLE.**

PART THE FIRST.

VOL. IV.

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LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

ANTAR.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BUT King Cais and the tribes of Abs and Fazarah and their party, amounting to twenty-five thousand men, armed, and well accoutred, continued their march, eager for battle, against the tribe of Aamir. At their head was Hadifah with a thousand horsemen, as the advance of the tribe of Fazarah.

They had marched about half-way, when a dust arose, beneath which were discovered a hundred horsemen, at whose head was the Brandisher of Spears, and at his side Harith son of Zalim. The cause of this was as follows: when Harith sent back Hadifah's messenger, engaging to assist him against the tribe of Aamir, he immediately marched to join Khalid, who joyfully received him, and conferred rich honorary robes on him and his party; he also presented him his steed Caasa, which had belonged to King Zoheir, and bestowed on

VOL. IV.

B

him his scimitar Zeenoor; it being his intent to pay every possible attention to Harith. And as he inspected the Arabs that were assembled at the general call to arms, he observed the Brandisher of Spears had mounted at their head with one hundred horsemen; he himself also followed with Harith. This party formed the advance of the army, and continued their march till they met Hadifah.

As soon as they met, their shouts arose: Come on, my cousins, exclaimed Hadifah, this is but an insignificant band, they do not exceed a hundred men; so plunder them with the sharp-edged scimitar. At Hadifah's call Harith came forth into the plain. Eh, son of an accursed mother, cried Hadifah, is this thy conduct towards us? Dost deny thy connection with us, and has thy soul thus acquiesced in perfidy in the plain and the desert? Ay, replied Harith laughing, for I am celebrated for my treachery, it is one of my natural habits; wise indeed were you to suppose I should assist you and a tribe that had admitted their slave among their chiefs, and made their herdsmen their champions: never will I condescend to sit with the tribe of Abs till I have slain their slave Antar, and have put numbers of them to death. But if you wish to secure yourself, away home; no more of your impertinence; engage not this army, or you and the tribe of Fazarah will be cut off, root and branch. Hadifah was confounded; perceiving that

he had fallen into a predicament out of which he could not escape but by fighting, he called out to his thousand; and men engaged men and heroes heroes. Blood flowed and streamed, whilst Harith and the Brandisher of Spears pierced through the horsemen of Fazarah, and made their advantages turn to their loss; for the hundred Aamirites withstood the thousand of Fazarah, and the spear thrust continued to clash on either side, and the dust to conglomerate, and the blood to gush from the wounds, till the armies came up and joined them. At that moment shouts were raised on all quarters; all were blinded to their dangers; every one that arrived, and saw the engagement, laboured and exerted his powers, and fought till the scene exceeded all calculation, and the carnage and terror were dreadful. King Cais and the Absian heroes arrived, and the battle raged among them with foot and leg. The sea of death waved and rolled its stormy surge. The complexions and constitutions of all were convulsed. Shame fell upon the coward, and the brave were painted with crimson gore. Lords became slaves, and the desert and rocks were agitated. Harith performed on that day exploits that confounded the sight; his chief object being to assault the tribe of Abs. Before evening, the Absians and the tribe of Fazarah being evidently worsted, the two armies separated on the advance of darkness. King Cais halted; and he now repented of having listened to the advice of

the wretch Rebia, and that he had followed his opinions, all of which were perfidious, and had rejected Antar, son of Shedad. Cousins, said Cais, in a general consultation, we have indeed taken rash counsel, and we have mangled our reputation amongst the high and low; never could I have imagined that this dog would have ventured against us in arms: I was mistaken in this tyrant. O King, said Rebia, I was indeed aware of his iniquity, and his malice, and his perfidy, and his treachery, but now it is all over; we are come hither to seek retaliation, and we have no other resource but to draw out the troops into the field of battle, and expose ourselves to the barbs of the spears, otherwise the Arabs of Hijaz will despise us. Moreover send to your relation, King Numan, that he may aid us with an army, or if you please, send for our cousin, the reliever of our sorrows and our griefs, Antar, son of Shedad; he will come and remove this difficulty from us, and will slay Harith in the battle and the contest. Who, my brother, said Amarah, is that black wittol, Antar? what achievement is there this army cannot effect, amongst which the first acknowledge, and the last assert, there is none like the terrible Amarah in the time of difficulty. Silence, O Amarah! said Asyed, no more of your nonsense, this is all your plan and your brother's plan; but by the faith of an Arab, had we known that our champion Antar was not of our party, not one of us would have followed you.

My advice is, that you send after him, and apologize to him, and make your whole dependence on him, or the Aamirites will invade your lands: should Antar acquiesce, it will be out of pure generosity and benevolence, and if he refuses to attend, he will be excusable. But as to your proposal of requesting assistance of Numan, before a messenger could reach him, or his armies come to your aid, your flesh will be in the maws of the eagles: for the proverb says, whilst the medicine is coming from Irak, the viper-bitten dies. By the faith of an Arab, there is no one but Antar. Nazih seconded Asyed in this proposition, as did all Antar's friends.

As soon as the King heard his uncle's opinion thus declared, he was convinced of its propriety, and at the instant he wrote a letter to Antar, in which he said: To him, whom we acknowledge as our cousin and the remover of our sorrows—the inextinguishable hot-coal of the tribe of Abs, and its ever-burning flame: know, O my cousin, that enemies have calumniated you to me (they are those to whom iniquity is natural), and you also know, my cousin, all the kind love I bear towards you; entertain not, therefore, any malice against us. O generous knight! what I request of you is, that you hasten your journey hither, in order to take retaliation for King Zoheir: let there be no other answer, O Aboolfawaris, but the applying of your foot to the stirrup; delay not, for death and de-

struction are descending upon us. He folded the letter, and gave it to a messenger, ordering him to be very expeditious.

King Cais laid himself down, and meditated on these deeds of fate. The two armies also reposed, keeping the watch till morning dawned. Harith, son of Zalim, started forth into the scene of battle, and galloping and charging to and fro, he cried out, come forth, ye Absians, knight to knight, or a hundred to one—or a thousand against one; and if you think it scanty justice, assail me all of ye at once, that I may tear out your lives by the sword-blow and the spear-thrust. Art thou not ashamed, cried Hadifah, at what thou hast said, and at drawing thy sword in the face of thy tribe? Eh, O Hadifah, said Harith, I acknowledge no such calculation—no parentage; but if thou wouldst escape death, hie thee away, take the tribe with thee, and go home to thy family: thwart me not, or thou diest, otherwise come on to the contest of swords. Do not imagine that I will respect thee on account of the connexion that exists between us. How is it that thou art fighting with those who have clothed thee in shame, and hast rejected the aid of those who came to seek retaliation for thee? Eh, O Harith, replied Hadifah, and where is that black slave? It was on your account we repulsed him: but he will soon join us here; for when we saw you allied to our foes, King Cais sent a messenger for Antar: he will assuredly come and disperse these armies.

Harith, on hearing this, rushed at him, and they began the contest. Fatigue soon fell on the arms of Hadifah; he was exhausted, and disgrace quickly succeeded his glory. Harith, being aware of his situation, assailed him, and pierced him with his spear through the thigh into the horse's side. Hadifah fell to the ground, and Harith standing over him on horseback, exclaimed, Rise, thou son of a coward! were there not a kindred between us, I would strike off thy neck with this sword. Haml, observing his brother's condition, urged on his horse till he came up to Harith. O son of Zalim, said he, have we deserved this of thee? Not so prolix, replied Harith. I forbid him the combat, but he would not desist: dismount, and take him with thee—depart to thy tribe; but if thou hast any wish for another contest, come on to the fight. Haml dismounted, and carried away his brother on his horse's back, seeking the tribe of the generous Absians; whilst Harith continued to gallop and charge, exclaiming, O tribe of Abs, I will not permit any but myself to punish you, that I may appease my whole heart among you; for you are my relations, and I have a right to seize your horses and your armour. Upon this, the Absians went out against him, horseman after horseman; but he robbed them of their lives, and carried off their horses and their arms; till night coming on and day disappearing, the armies retired to their tents, and the heroes laid themselves down to sleep, after they

had stationed the patrols. But as soon as it was light, the armies being mounted and the troops drawn up, Harith appeared between the two ranks, galloping, and charging, and prancing over the four corners of the plain, and admiring himself in the field of battle, he thus burst forth: "Let me hear the fall of the sharp-edged scimitars, and the whizzing of the spears through the body. Let me drink of the blood of horsemen in the course, between the flash of the sword and the dark shadow of the spear. Talk no more of the dwellings of Mey, or the land of Hind, or the tents of Seaad; for there is no glory for youth in cups of wine, circling under the shade of the vine, and in the valley. Glory is only in the battle—dust in the day of contest, or the blow through the heart. Consider no one as a friend among men—look on man as thine enemy. Smite every one with the sword, and requite faith with outrage and injury. As to the action thou deemest virtuous, rush eagerly to its reverse by iniquity. O tribe of Abs, how can ye escape by flight this day on your generous steeds? My scimitar is firmly grasped in my hand, and death dwells upon the double edge of my spear. Come forth or retreat, you will find me a knight that will never flinch in the day of action."

On hearing this, pride and indignation raged in the heads of the Absians, for they were men bound on retaliation. Instantly stood forth Nazih on his

high-bred steed, famed in the day of battle: he attacked Harith, and rushing upon him without saying a word, he startled him by his impetuosity. They commenced the assault, and the combat, and the contest; their rage and passion increased—they laboured in the blow and the thrust, in advancing and retreating, till, being exhausted by repeated charges, they both stood still, gazing each at his antagonist. But as soon as they were rested, they vaulted again on their horses with renovated spirits, and recommenced the wrestle and the struggle. At last Harith charged down upon Nazih, and wearied and exhausted him. Asyed was alarmed for his son; when, lo! a knight, black as a mass of rock, came forth from the hostile ranks of the tribe of Aamir: he was strong-limbed, broad-shouldered, soiled with dust, scantily armed, and ill supplied with weapons: he had an instrument of war that could repel no blow, that could ward off no disaster: his spear was spliced together with reeds; his saddle was of wood, and his stirrup of palmyra rope: under him was a meagre, foundered horse; but he himself was like a devouring lion. When the horsemen beheld him they thought he was Khalid's slave; but as soon as that knight came close to Harith, Resign thy foe, he cried, thou son of a coward; and, he added, dost thou not know that these tribes that are assembled against the tribe of Abs, are come to seek property and plunder? and I among the rest have passed the valleys and the

mountains, and am come in quest of some booty, that I may return to my home and my family: but thou alone hast occupied the field of battle, and hast left every one besides thyself in starvation and penury. Now retire, and leave the fight, otherwise, by him who rooted firm the towering sides of the mountains, and has power over life and death, I will pierce thee with this broken spear: content thyself on the tribe of Abs with an easier prey, and begone!

Harith, on hearing these contemptuous expressions from this Bedoween, assailed him and thrust at him; but this Bedoween stooped and avoided the blow, and struck him with his spear on his back: it startled him, but the Bedoween's spear dropped down, shivered in four. Harith escaped the Bedoween, who dismounted, and began splicing it with some pieces of cord, and picked up the fragments from the plain. The Arabs were in great astonishment at the conduct of this rustic, and thought him mad. But the danger was removed from Nazih, for Harith had nearly killed him. Now when Nazih observed the Bedoween, and that he was tying up his spear, his generous spirit was roused; he galloped up to him, and said, Think no more, young man, of mending your spear, but take this, and return again to your antagonist; overthrow him, or he will turn against you in his malice. Take also this horse, for he will assist you in the charge; for had you a steed that was accustomed

to the plain of battle, you would soon destroy this demon; and you may then accomplish every wish with respect to the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Upon this, the Bedoween received the spear from Nazih; he mounted the offered horse, and quite pleased, O my lord, he cried, take charge of this my horse, for it is of a high breed, till this difficulty is removed from me. Thus saying, he returned to Harith, and rushed upon him, and flinging up the spear into the air with his hand, he caught it as it fell rolling round, and pierced Harith with the butt end of it on the chest: it hurled him to the ground, and his bones were bruised. Well, my lord, said he again to Nazih, take this horse on which he rode, and I will carry off his armour and spoils. Nazih took it, and charged upon it over the plain. When King Cais marked that horse beneath Harith, he was melted like lead; but now, seeing him mounted by his cousin, his concern and grief subsided. Let one of ye go to this Bedoween, said he to his attendants, and promise him wealth on my part; induce him to drive Harith towards us, before his comrades attack and rescue him out of our hands, or he will purchase his life from this poor fellow; and while King Cais was thus conversing, the Bedoween pointed to the tribe of Aamir, and cried out, O Mooferridj! O Mooferridj! and there issued forth a horseman in the same plight as himself. Dismount for this vile wretch, he cried, and bind fast his shoulders, for I cannot trouble such a fine

Chief as this, who gave me his arms, to whom I am also obliged for this horse. I have no doubt in my mind that he must be a king's son, and I wish this day to equal him in my gains, and to divide between him and me the horse and arms. I know he does not want it; but the chase is always an object, and the heart and soul are ever interested in it. Thus saying, he turned towards the tribe of Aamir, and defied them to the combat. When Khalid saw what this vagrant Arab had done to Harith, and heard him cry out to his comrade, who quitted the Aamir ranks,—By the faith of an Arab, he exclaimed, no doubt amongst these tribes that we have assembled there must be one who is our foe, or else some Ab-sians have mingled with us. So he prohibited the troops from attacking, and sent for some one to bring him this Bedoween in disgrace and infamy. Jandah issued forth, roaring like an enraged lion, as he shouted, What art thou, foul Arab? and he rushed at him; but the Bedoween charged upon him, and they engaged till the scene of action appeared too confined; they clung to each other on their horses' backs; they grappled and struggled till their steeds were exhausted; they wrestled and grasped till all power and strength were extinct. But the vagrant Arab was the most forceful and the stoutest; he gave his adversary the grasp of a lion, and threw him on his feet by his superior might; he tore off his sword from round his neck, and endeavoured to drive him away with him; but as

Jandah resisted, he smote him with his sword, and made a gash on his shoulder, crying out with a loud voice, Hither, O Mosayid ! O Mosayid ! and there started forth a horseman from the same spot as the former. The Bedoween delivered Jandah over to him, and ordered him to take charge of him, saying, Let us see by the end of the day how many more of these filthy fellows will fall into our hands, and then we will consult about our further pleasures and wants. When the two tribes saw these deeds, they began to form various conjectures. As to King Cais, By the faith of an Arab, he cried, assistance is come to us, whence we know not : for Jandah is the very fellow that smote my father's head, and we are revenged for the iniquity of Harith, son of Zalim ; we have only now to gain over to us the heart of this vagrant, and promise him whatever he wants : this Bedoween cannot be Antar ; but like him there is no one human being, for he came forth into the plain naked, and has laid low knights such as these. O king, said Shedad, how oft you degrade the merit of my son, and raise the value of others ! Know, O king, if this Bedoween were my son, I should have recognised him from any other horseman ; from me he could not have been disguised. But I am certain of it, O Shedad, said Oorwah ; I did recognise him from every other horseman, and marked him as he attempted to outstrip the horse. This is madness, said King Cais ; as to Antar, we only sent to him last night, so how could a messen-

ger reach him? and between us there are eight days; we must suppose he followed us the very day of our departure. O king, said Shedad, had he followed us, it would not have been surprising; but as to his uniting with the tribe of Aamir, he must have heard that you boasted of Harith as being superior to him, and that you had bespoken his aid: he must have fought with your foes thinking Harith was on your side, with the wish to destroy him, and do with him just as he has done, and to show you his power: for my son is patient and forbearing—resentment has no place in him, and never will he allow an Arab to triumph at your expense. Just then advanced Nazih and Antar, and Harith and Jandah, with Shiboob and Jareer, dragging them along. The cause of Antar's arrival was this: as soon as he went to the tents, and, his meeting with Ibla being accomplished, he felt delighted at seeing her; but when the women had quitted him, he said to Shiboob, O my brother, I wish to follow the Absians, and see what Harith is doing: I will issue out against him and take him prisoner; and I will show Hadifah and Rebia the evil effects of such a plan. And in what form, said Shiboob, do you wish to go? In the disguise of a miserable slave, said he: I, you, and Jareer; and we will just sling spears over us. Upon this they mounted some broken-down horses, and rode on till they came within two days of the armies, and mixed among the tribe of Aamir, thinking Harith

was with the Absians ; but when he saw what he had done, and observed how he fought, he knew him, and went forth against him and did as he did ; but as soon as he had taken Jandah prisoner, he raised up his vizor, and Nazih recognised him : he kissed him in excess of joy, saying, O Aboolfawaris, verily thou hast done the deed of the most generous of men, and thou hast well kindled the flame of war and battle. By the faith of an Arab, had I or my father known that thou wert to have staid at home, we would not have followed Cais into this difficulty, but we would have left him, confiding in the opinions of Hadifah and Rebia. My lord, said Antar, it does not become a slave to reproach his master : this Jandah is he who murdered my lord, king Zoheir : he is the accomplice of Khalid, son of Giafer, and here his villany is rewarded. But, by the faith of an Arab, the deliverance of King Zoheir's horse and sword is dearer to me than my conquest over these horsemen, for by them Khalid deceived us, as you know, in the defile. I must requite that Khalid, and must abandon his land as a desert. But now return with me to our party : and as they went on, Antar thus recited :—" God has ennobled the son of Shedad, and what his sword and the thrust with his spear have effected against the enemy : our property was plundered from us in fear, and our friends could not repose in their alarms. But I grasped the chiefs of the Aamirites by mid-day, and I shall pass an evening in joy, like a quaffer.

"of wine. I am a warrior that glories in his She-dadian birth, whilst the fire of battle blazes on the plain."

Cais heard Antar's verses, and recognising him, he hastened to meet him. I am now indeed convinced, O Aboolfawaris, he said, and making his apologies, he added, Think not that after the death of my father and my brother I have had sufficient presence of mind for the guidance of my conduct; indeed whoever volunteered his advice, I accepted it, and communed with his heart. Antar accepted this apology, and delivered over to him the murderer of his father. Eh, said Cais to Jandah, with this sword thou didst murder my father? Ay! said he. And with it, pursued Cais, will I strike off thy head: and as he spoke, he drew it forth from its scabbard, and as he waved it in his hand, flashes of light shot from its blade, and with it he smote Jandah, and severed his head from his body. This being done, they returned to the tents, and darkness soon coming on, the hostile tribe passed a night of despair; whilst Khalid, meditating on what had passed, out of precaution for his own person, directed his own countrymen to watch the tribe of Marah; Do not take any notice till day dawns, and then we shall see what the Absians will do with their chief, Harith.

But as to the illustrious Absians, their spirits revived at the arrival of their champion, Antar, and at the amelioration of their affairs after such agitation. King Cais assembled his chiefs and con-

sulted with them about Harith; the first who spoke about releasing him was Rebia, for he wished to reserve this calamity against Antar. My opinion is, O King, that you set him at liberty. And mine, said Shedad, that you strike off his head, and yours too, Rebia, on account of what we have suffered from his atrocities, you dotard! Every one that spoke was of this opinion. At last said Asyed, O my cousins, send for the man, and let us hear what he has to say, and if there is in him any room for favour, let him be pardoned; but if we find him resolute in his perverseness, put him to death. Every one approving of this advice, they produced Harith in chains.

Well! thou son of an accursed mother, cried Antar rising up, sword in hand, what induced thee to hostilities against thy tribe and to aid their foes? Nought induced me to such a deed but thou, replied Harith. By the faith of an Arab, truth is now the best course, O hero; my reason for this is, that I have long stationed spies and scouts over thee, till I heard of the death of King Zoheir, and that thy tribe was proceeding to avenge itself: so I imagined thou must be of the party, and accordingly I have done this deed: I said, I would also have retaliation, but thou hast vanquished me, and shame is heaped on shame. But hast thou not heard of my exploits? said Antar. Yes, said he; but my ambition glossed over my ignorance, and I could not ever suppose that fortune would be-

tray me, and that there was any one on the earth to oppose me. But now I am become more modest. I have learned that fortune can produce every miracle. I have fallen into your power. I acknowledge my crime. Annihilation is what I deserve. Thou hast now only to put me to death, or pardon me that I may be thy slave for ever. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, if I thought that in thee there was room for grace, thou shouldst be pardoned: but I have heard of thee, that thou art a man of perfidy; an impostor, neither regarding protections, nor heeding hospitality, but one that breaks his faith and his oaths. Thou art right, O Aboolfawaris, said Harith, this was my disposition, but this day I have not the heart to harm either one on horseback, or one on foot. Well, said Antar to Cais, it will be as well to release him, and let him return home, for I am in a merry mood after my conquest. O Champion of the Absians, said Harith, do not delay, that I may on thy account put to the rout the armies of the tribe of Aamir, and whitewash my face among these tribes; then will I return home, and be thankful to thee. May God curse him who will not extirpate them with the sword, and that will not cut them off old and young! said Antar. I truly believe, my cousin, said Rebia, that you are able to do so; but if you are not satisfied with the oath of Harith, I will be his surety. So Rebia took Harith away with him to the division of the race of Zeead; and when he was alone with

him, he asked him what he really felt in his heart with respect to Antar. O Rebia, said he, I must positively contrive his death, and his destruction. Yes, said Rebia, but at another time; for now we are in want of both him and you: it is now advisable that you remain firm to your promise—there will be time enough. Thus they staid together, till, the day dawning, the men started up, and the warriors prepared: and lo! shouts burst forth from the tribe of Aamir; and their hordes waved like the sea over the desert, brandishing their swords: the dust arose on high and spread far and wide. The reason of this was, that Khalid had a spy among the tribe of Abs, whom he had sent over night to observe what was done to Harith. Early in the morning he returned, and told him it was Antar who had taken the horsemen prisoners, and that Harith had amicably settled his affairs with his tribe; and he has promised, added the spy, to destroy our armies. This is just his nature, said Khalid, for he cannot adhere long to his friends, or ever be sincere with his allies. But it would be expedient for us to begin with them, before they begin with us. Thus saying, he ordered his people to surround the tribe of Marah, and ply the sword among them: and they did so. As soon as Harith heard the shouts of his companions, he cried out, O, by the Arabs, the tribe of Marah is destroyed. Alas! we have not succeeded: and he made the attack,—he, and Rebia, and his brother, followed

by a thousand Fazarah horsemen, and some others from the tribe of Abs, headed by King Cais. The Absians assaulted the left of the Aamirites, and Antar led them on. Heroes were strewn on the plain: the multitudes were hustled together: coats of mail sparkled: swords cut in twain: the thousands rushed to the fight: Indian scimitars were shivered; and the Semhirian spears were shattered and split: calamities fell heavy on the tribe of Aamir. Noble pride and spirit animated the Absians. Antar performed deeds no Knight of Ignorance ever executed; for his thrusts anticipated the breath, and his assaults were incomprehensible—his shout was, Retaliation for King Zoheir and Shas! and he slew every hero he trampled down. Thus they continued till evening came on, when they separated. Harith had encountered the Brandisher of Spears, and passed the rest of the day in fighting and dealing spear-thrusts that would have turned children grey; and at the close of the day both were wounded and nearly dead. But when the two armies separated, Khalid, perceiving that his troops were discomfited, and that their numbers were greatly diminished, assembled the chieftains, and set out on his march home; whilst the Absians retired exulting at the victory and conquest they had gained; and there was not one but extolled Antar; and when they heard of Khalid's departure, Antar wished to follow them, but Cais refused, on account of the great fatigue and distresses they had already

endured. They laid down to rest in the tents, till God dawned with the day. Well, said Antar to King Cais, it will be but proper to give this booty to the tribes of Fazarah and Ghiftan, and that we reward them well and abundantly, and send them contented back to their homes and country. But let us surprise the land of Aamir; let none but ourselves assail them; let us do our own business ourselves. Cais approved of this plan, and he distributed the arms and the armour, saying to Hadifah, O my cousin, we have now no occasion to trouble you, for you have been wounded in our service, and he that wounded you is your nearest relation. Rebia has arranged Harith's affair with us, and the man will march home in company with you. It would be as well that you should not reproach him, for many of his men have been slain in this attack. Thus he sent them away, and there only remained with the Absians a thousand of the tribe of Ghiftan, with their chief, Jamrah, son of Sabic; for he was nearly allied to King Zoheir, and he swore he would not return home till he had taken retaliation for King Zoheir.

The next day, King Cais marched with his troops, amounting, exclusive of the Ghiftanians, to five thousand horsemen. The chief Antar headed the army; and with him was Asyed, and Oorwah, and Nazih; and thus he elegized King Zoheir:—

“ Behold! we have opposed the edges of the
“ scimitars and the barbs of the spears on the swift-

“footed coursers. To engage the foe we have
“sufficient force, were they even like the tem-
“pestuous ocean. There is no glory in numbers; but
“the glory of warriors was the dispersion of these
“armies. Ask the Absians of me, O Ibla, when
“the hordes of Kelab came against me with the
“tribes of Ghani and Aamir, rolling like the waves
“of the sea under the cloud-shadowed sky, con-
“vulsed by the furious tread of the horses’ hoofs.
“How they fled and the spears on their backs
“pierced their kidneys between their entrails and
“their hypocondres; had they stood firm, I would
“have left behind, on the desert, their bones and
“flesh for the rapacious eagles; how well my tribe
“exerted itself without the aid of Zalim’s son!
“foul was his act, his word perfidious. He said
“there was none on earth like him; but when he
“encountered me, then shone forth the glory of
“glories; he was to our foes an ally and assistant;
“but he retreated from my sword, frustrated and
“of no avail. I love the tribe of Abs, and when
“blood flows, the friendship of a slave is sincere,
“and his word is true and faithful. They ap-
“proached, when they had sent me away, and
“encountered the spears flashing with light: they
“felled Zoheir, and the lacerating spears, and
“lances, and scimitars clashed over him. He in
“his power was the death of men; but he who was
“the cause of death, has now visited the inhabitant
“of the tombs. O woe, woe! that his foes have

“triumphed over him, the crown of the Absians
“and all the tribes! But I will not allow Khalid,
“now Zoheir is gone and murdered, a resting-place
“but in the bowels of the graves. How can I
“sleep by night, and not seek revenge? for he was
“my resource in every difficulty.”

When Antar had finished his verses, his party thanked him for the excellence of his achievements; and they continued traversing the deserts, and in their hearts was a burning flame against Khalid. In the meantime, Khalid reached his own country, and there remained with him out of all his assembled host, only ten thousand horsemen (for every clan sought its home and departed). His own tribe advised him to send the women and families to the mountain-tops: thus having secured their wives and property, they prepared to meet their foes.

The next day arrived the Absians, and their armour glittered, as they surrounded the tribe of Aamir on all sides. But Khalid, seeing their scanty numbers, was delighted. O my cousins, he cried, rejoice, for they are only come with a small party. He attacked, and his warriors followed him, but he saw in the Absians blows that turned infants grey. The spears pierced through every mortal part of their bodies; the dust and clouds of sand increased till darkness came on and the two armies separated; but the Absians had greatly the advantage over the Aamirites; for Antar, knowing how they relied on him, did more than he had promised, and

performed deeds no one could surpass. Before evening, twelve hundred Aamirites were slain, but only seventy of the Absians. Antar retired, clothed in a scarlet robe of the blood of horsemen; eleven horses had been killed under him, for none but Abjer could serve him (now Abjer was at home, and Antar had come on a miserable hack). When King Cais saw Antar's resolution and intrepidity, he gloried in him, and from that hour he felt convinced that his kingdom would not last but by his assistance; so he went to meet him and thanked him, and he and his brothers treated him with every kindness. But the tribe of Aamir retired in the deepest consternation, and dispirited at the loss of their chiefs, and as they stated in their complaints to Khalid, what they had experienced from Antar's sword, O my cousins, said he, your excuses are indeed well-founded this time, for it was this black slave that routed us with his attacks; and if I do not take a great part of the battle on myself, we shall be completely cut up; and with this intention he reposed till the day shone and the men sprung up for the contest and battle.

The ranks were scarcely drawn up, or the swords unsheathed, when lo! out started a knight from the tribe of Aamir, and advancing towards the Absians, O tribe of Adnan! O band of heroes! he exclaimed, I have come forth this day to the field to protect the women and families, and I will try myself in the scene of slaughter, and by the faith of

an Arab, I have not completed my twentieth year; never have I quitted the tents and dwellings of my tribe: come forth against me, any one whose kindred equals mine, for I am, by the faith of an Arab, of an illustrious tribe—renowned for their patience in the day of tumults. I am called Aamir, the son of Tofeil, and the Brandisher of Spears is my maternal uncle, and were he not wounded he would not acquiesce in this my wish. Then galloping and charging, he thus spoke:—

“Do not, O my mother, indulge in thy sorrows
“for me: have patience on the day of my con-
“test and my absence. Let me singly act in the
“quest of glory with the edge of my well-propor-
“tioned Indian scimitar. Let me be proclaimed
“through the exalted mansions of renown for the
“piercing barb of my supple spear. Who, when
“in quest of glory, feels conscious that this sport is
“of bitter flavour? Perhaps I may, with the edge
“of my sword, extinguish the flame of the fiercely-
“burning battle. I will show myself to the foe;
“and I will rescue my tribe from the lions on their
“high-mettled steeds; or I will meet my fate with
“the mangling spear, for whose sting there is no
“balm. I will abandon my mother to pour out her
“sorrows in childless misery, and to shed her tears
“of anguish.”

He had scarcely finished his verses, when an Absian horseman galloped against him, and presented himself before him. This was a knight of

exceeding courage; firm and resolute in the combat: over him was a strong corselet and a cleaving sword; round his shoulder was slung a lacerating spear; beneath him was a swift courser: but Aamir permitted him neither to gallop nor to charge, before he pierced him between the paps, and forced his spear through his shoulders. He again repeated his challenge, and a second came forth, but he slew him instantly. O Absian tribe, by the faith of an Arab, he cried in his boasts and his vaunts, ye are the horsemen of the age, and the heroes of Adnan; but I am of little experience in battle. Come out against me, brave as ye are, ye heroes! despise not my youth—let me try myself with some of your knights, and your warriors. When the Absians heard this harangue, and saw what deeds Aamir had effected, they rushed upon him from all sides, and issued forth against him like sea-monsters, brandishing their spears and their swords. But a knight, beautiful in form, and short in speech, anticipated them all. He was perfect in every point, and was called Carwash, son of Hani, and cousin to King Cais. The horsemen, seeing him advance, halted, and retired in awe of him. Carwash assailed Aamir: they began the attack: they thrust with their spears till they were shivered, and smote with their swords till they were shattered; and their horses died under them. They continued in this perilous contest till mid-day, when the dust clearing away from them, lo! Aamir came forth with

Carwash, his prisoner, and driving him away like a camel. The horsemen checked themselves from rushing into the scene of action; but Antar was greatly exasperated, and his eyes were red as blood—he resolved on darting out against him, but Nazih anticipated him, and engaged Aamir till the evening, when each quitted his antagonist and described what he had experienced that day. As Aamir retired to his party, his cousins met him and congratulated him on his safety. As to Khalid, he was in ecstasies of joy—it was impossible to be more so. But the tribe of Abs was impatient for the morrow; and as soon as the obscurity of night departed and the day shone bright, the warriors sprung forward for the fight and the contest, and Aamir, son of Tofeil, was foremost on the plain, and thus spoke:

“The mother of Aamir exerted her influence to prevent my mounting at the voice of the herald. She would keep me back, fearful of death on the edge of the Indian blades. Do not be obstinate or perverse, O mother, death is ordained by fate, and it is near as well as at a distance. Let me plunge into the seas of deaths with the light and noble chargers. O, tribe of Abs, there is no refuge from my sword, or my spear, nor from death. Therefore either retreat or stand firm. You will ever find in me a knight that never flinches from the scene of battle.”

Aamir, having concluded his verses, rushed to the combat and repeated the challenge. Soon came forth

Oorwah ; but Antar dismissed him, and descended upon Aamir, saying, Come on, on to the field of battle ! Eh ! thou basè-born ! cried Aamir, recognizing him, I will not fight with one whose birth is so mean and vile among the Arabs. I say this not out of fear of thee, nor of death. But my mother saw me in a dream, and went to a soothsayer to whom she imparted the secret ; and he said to her, Let not your son contend with a black slave. Eh, thou bastard ! cried Antar, and shall I, on account of thy mother's visions, permit thee to destroy the horsemen of the tribes of Abs and Adnan in the field of battle ? Thus saying, he shouted at Aamir and rushed upon him, and Aamir was compelled to meet him. A dreadful combat ensued between them—it was a contest that would melt even the hardest rocks, and stupefy the eyeballs and terrify the bravest warriors. They continued in this state till the warriors were astounded ; but when Antar perceived his intrepidity he closed upon him, and hemming him in so close that stirrup grated stirrup, he grasped the rings of his coat of mail and breastplate and held him up in his hand, like a sparrow in the talons of a ferocious hawk, and threw him over to Shiboob, who bound fast his shoulders and tied down his arms and sides, and as he was going to drive him away towards the Absians, lo ! Aamir's mother rushed forth, crying out, and her slaves were leading along Carwash, son of Hani : O Aboolfawaris, she exclaimed, force not my son to taste of the meat of captivity ;

here is Carwash at your disposal, only release my son, Aamir, as his ransom. Antar hailed Shiboob, and ordered him to let Aamir go; and having thus rescued Carwash, he retired from the scene of multitudes. Now came on the night of obscurity, and let down its canopy over the two horizons. The two armies reposed till the morning dawned, when mounted the tribe of Abs and the tribe of Aamir; and the troops being drawn up in array, lo! Khalid issued forth between the hostile ranks on a white and black charger indefatigable and unflinching; he was completely enclosed in armour, and he cried out in a loud voice, Eh, O sons of King Zoheir, how long must last this contest, this destruction of warriors, this dishonour of wives and women? This is a circumstance no high-born hero can endure. I am he who slew your father Zoheir and your brother Shas. I will not suffer any one to aid me in this affair; here am I in person, come forth against me one by one, but let no one as the first come forth but your King Cais; for he has taken the seat of his father, and I am the King of the tribe of Aamir and the chief of the Hordes and the Clans; whoever shall slay his antagonist, let him succeed in his projects and complete his hopes. King Cais heard this, and the affliction fell heavy on him; and thus too were his brothers, and there was not one but welcomed death. Antar marked their situation; he roared and bellowed: What is the matter, O King? he cried; Cannot one of ye command himself to go out against him?

Well, let me bring him to you a prisoner. I will lay him down before you abject and debased. O my cousin, said King Cais, by thy life, return to thy post and let me appease my heart with Khalid, and I will not let the Arabs look on me as one incapable and inefficient; so he moved forward on the back of Caasa, and rushed against Khalid. Upon this, Antar retired, but resolved in his own mind that if he should see King Cais overpowered by Khalid, he would make an attack and assist him. Cais encountered Khalid, and between them was a contest and combat that seared the eyeballs. They continued till the honour of chivalry was rent and mangled, and they were charging and staggering till their spears were split in their hands; they threw them on the ground—they grasped their sparkling blades, as instruments more ready for the plunder of lives, and they continued this conflict till also their swords were shivered; they returned their fragments to their scabbards, and grasped each other on their horses' backs with all their might and main, and both fell to the ground, both firmly clinging to each other; there they wrestled and struggled till death and the worst of evils was at hand. It was then the two armies attacked, and the troops rushed forward. It was then horsemen shouted from every quarter. It was then they waved their spears and their scimitars. It was then rage and indignation violently seized Antar, and he advanced to see how it was with Cais; but Rebia, son of Ocail, met him, and the heart of

each was full of the day in the defile and the circumstances that befel them. The horsemen of the two tribes moved towards their respective kings, like fragments of clouds, and the combat and the battle raged fiercely among them. Arab necks were hewn off, and the dust rose up like clouds, and all around them was like the darkness of night. The brothers of King Cais made a furious assault and fought in the most desperate manner. Antar and Rebia, son of Ocail, were also engaged in a combat that transformed youth to age. Antar, indeed, alarmed lest death and extinction should fall upon Cais, burst on Rebia with the rush of a lion, and with a shout as if it were thunder when it crashes. Rebia was petrified with horror and aghast with affright, and in this state of consternation, Antar pierced him with his spear through the chest, and drove it out sparkling through his back, and instantly renewed his attack against the Aamirites like a savage lion; he felled down the horsemen; he cut through their comrades till he came up with the sons of King Zoheir and Khalid, who only considered them all as one individual. But Antar halted, and, extending wide his arm with his sword, he was about to slay Khalid, when lo! Rebia, son of Zeead, shouted out, Hold! O Aboolfawaris, for Malik, son of Zoheir, and my brother Amarah are fallen his prisoners, and if you put Khalid to death they will both be slaughtered, and ruin must be our doom. Thus was Antar most grievously distressed; he ordered Shiboob to bind him fast, and

Khalid felt assured of death. But when Cais saw this he sprung on his feet, and Antar waited for him ; alarmed at his situation, he encouraged him, and sent Shiboob for a horse and mounted him. Conduct my Lord from the terrors of the fight, said Antar to Shiboob, that I may disperse these horsemen, and he assaulted the army and forced them to a disgraceful retreat, overthrowing warriors and destroying the brave, till the evening closed in. The Aamirites were completely routed. The Absians returned from the pursuit without any loss, not even to the value of a halter; and when they alighted to rest, they hastened to King Cais and congratulated him on his safety. Rebia informed him of the captivity of Malik and his brother Amarah. O Rebia, said Cais, much afflicted, my brother and thy brother can never be liberated, but by the deliverance of this cuckold. Were it not so, I would strike off his head and would drink of his blood. Guard him till we to-morrow ransom our prisoners by him, and we must wait some future event for him. My lord, said Antar, distress not yourself about the deliverance of our prisoners; if he escapes from me this day, he will not escape to-morrow ; and had I not been occupied with the death of that Rebia, son of Ocail, I would soon have made him drink of the cup of annihilation before this accident had happened. This night let the tribe of Aamir repose with their wives and families on the summits of the mountains, but to-morrow we will proceed on foot against them with sword and

buckler, and we will scatter them about like leaves. Cais was much pleased, and his sorrows were relieved. They slept till dawn, when they sent for Khalid, and informed him of their intentions, and demanded of him his ransom, to which he assented with oaths, in which the Arabs have the firmest reliance. Cais accordingly set him at liberty, and he departed for his tribe. But when he was about to deliver Malik and Amarah, the tribe of Aamir would not obey him, saying, We must hang these two, and revenge ourselves on them. The Absians indeed have slain our chiefs, and they will not quit us till they have entirely destroyed us.—Cousins, replied Khalid, in dismay, I have sworn to Cais by the severest oaths and the pillars, so what means this? Were we to be slaughtered like so many sheep, I cannot possibly perjure myself, and become a liar and a traitor; particularly whilst we are thus reduced and disgraced. We must exert all our strength in meeting the foe. I will assemble all who have blood and retaliation against them, and I will not desist till I have rooted out every trace of the tribe of Abs. Upon this, the hearts of the Aamirites being reconciled, he sent for Prince Malik and Amarah, and made them swear that their tribe should return home for the remainder of the year. Having given the required oath, they were sent down the mountain, mounted on noble horses, and very grateful for their security. But as soon as they reached their tribe, and explained what had

passed, May God curse the tribe of Aamir! said Cais, this is treachery and villany.—Khalid will decidedly, said Rebia, assemble against us his clans, and will write to every one that rides or walks; however, in a second rencontre we will root out every trace of them. King Cais thought this plan the most expedient; so he departed for his family and home. But Antar's heart was not at rest in retreating from the tribe of Aamir; and as he described what had occurred to him and his tribe, he thus recited:

“ Ah, O Ibla! my youth is wasted, and the
“ period of thy absence inflicts repeated tortures.
“ My love for thee is oppressive; it increases daily,
“ as age grows on youth. For thee I have passed
“ the revolutions of my fate, till my life fleets away,
“ and my patience is become my chastisement. I
“ have encountered the foe; I have protected the
“ tribe; but they despise me, and have no regard
“ for my existence. Ask of me, O Ibla! in the
“ day of adversity, the tribes of Aamir and Kelab.
“ How many knights I have left stretched out,
“ their hands deep died with gore! They moved
“ hither in my absence, and they brandished their
“ spears, glittering like the shooting stars. How
“ many lions have rushed at me, and in disgrace
“ have cast away their spears on the ground! They
“ cry out at me, and I answer them with the spear-
“ thrust, deciding before a reply. I have slain
“ two hundred free-born of them, and a thousand

“in the defiles and the sandhills. Ha! let Khalid rejoice in the calamities of my tribe; but the day of his extinction shall be the most tremendous of all the periods of misfortune.”

They continued traversing the deserts night and day, and Antar guarding them from the enemy, till they came near home; and when there only remained one night's march, on a sudden Antar was not to be heard of, and they could not trace him any where. King Cais was aghast and bewildered, as were also his brothers, and all Antar's friends; but his inveterate haters rejoiced in his absence, particularly Rebia and his despicable brother, and Malik, Ibla's father; and though Cais stopped the march of his people, and sent horsemen right and left till the evening, they returned disappointed and unsuccessful. By the faith of an Arab, said King Cais, I will not stir from hence till I know what has happened to our cousin.—This, said Amarah, would show but little wisdom and sagacity in you, that the Chiefs of Abs and Adnan should be kept waiting for a black slave, a worthless, mean fellow.—O Amarah! exclaimed King Cais, highly exasperated at such language, art thou not ashamed even to mention thy cousin in his absence? it was but the other day he rescued thee from captivity. By the faith of an Arab, were Antar here present, I would not screen thee from him.—O disgrace, disgrace at thy words; my cousin! cried Amarah.—Ay, he is thy cousin, said King

Cais, whether thou wilt or not; and were he not, not a head would be raised towards the tribe of Abs; of no esteem would they be among men.—It will be as well, said Rebia, that we wait for our cousin, till he comes. However, King Cais marched in the morning, yet greatly afflicted and distressed at the loss of Antar, the lion warrior; and when they reached the dwellings, they inquired about him, but no one could give any information of him. Every one entered his own abode, and joined his children and family. Malik, Ibla's father, having now heard from some of the women all that had passed between his daughter and Antar, when the tribe marched against the Aamirites, ran at her with his drawn sword, and roared to his wife, Thou foul wretch! wert thou not ashamed for thy child, that she should appear openly in the presence of Antar, and converse with him? Thou hast taught her to demand presents and goods of him, and it is thy wish to load me with infamy among men and women.—I had not done this, replied she, but that I saw you inclined towards him, and that you had bestowed her on him in marriage. But now, if your heart is estranged from him, I will never let him see her again.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HADIFAH and his brothers hearing of King Cais's return, took with them a party of the Fazarah tribe, and came to compliment him on his safety, and congratulate him on his victory and triumph. Cais made a splendid feast for them, to which he invited the chiefs of the Absians and his brothers, and informed them of the loss of Antar. Hadifah appeared greatly affected, and exhibited the reverse of what he felt. They ate meat and drank wine till mid-day, when the King, hearing some loud acclamations in the tents, asked what was the matter. Shiboob and his brother Antar are returned, was the general cry; when lo! Antar arrived. He saluted the Absians, and he was on horseback. King Cais inquired the cause of his absence. O King, he replied, I was on the service of one who deserved no duty at my hands; for he is of a villainous disposition, and of a foul origin.—To what dost thou allude by that? said Cais. Hear my tale, O King, said he, and you will acknowledge I am right. On the night that you missed me, I had launched out into the desert, fearful of the night-wanderers and the robbers on your account; and whilst I was thus employed, a figure appeared before me. I went forward, and lo! it was a va-

grant Arab on his journey. I hailed him; and to my inquiries, Warrior, said he, I am a poor, ill-used fellow. I am going to the tribe of Abs, to make a demand of Rebia.—I am, said I, O Arab, one of the slaves of Rebia, so tell me what he owes you.—Warrior, he replied, I am called Basharah, son of Mabid, and I have a daughter, who was demanded in marriage of me. I consented; and taking with me one hundred she-camels, I set out for the valley of Deecar, that I might purchase with their produce some clothes, with which to set off my daughter; but some plundering horse met me and waylaid me; they carried away my camels, but I escaped on this steed. Being certain the party were of the tribe of Kenanah, I took the nearest road, saying to myself, I will go to the tribe of Abs, to my friend Rebia. On this, I said to him, Rejoice, O Arab, for I am his deputy: lead on, and conduct me to your enemies, that I may realise your wishes. He proceeded, whilst I followed till the day dawned, when lo! we came upon a troop near the water of Career, and the land of Nefeer: there were forty horsemen; five and twenty of whom I slew, and the rest ran away. I restored to the man the horses, and the she-camels and he-camels, with which being well satisfied and grateful, he repaired to the family of Zeead. I returned, and have now erected for them a strong columned building; but I find them talking infamously of me, and abusing my mother for adultery: this is all my reward, and thus you may

distinguish the legitimate-born from bastards. How long, thou son of Zeead, added he, turning sharply on Amarah, must this insolence last? for by him who has clothed the night in darkness, if thou dost not cease talking foully of me, and mend thy manners, I will hack thy limbs with this sword. What! thou bastard, cried Amarah, jumping up and unsheathing his sword, such language to me! Darest thou thus impertinently insult me among the chiefs? At my pastures I have a thousand slaves such as thee; and he made at Antar sword in hand. But the others rose up and checked him; and Rebià called out, reproaching and abusing him: he ordered him to be silent, and taking the sword out of his hand, said, Is this a recompense for our cousin, who has exposed his life for us? But Antar moved silently away, and went home greatly ashamed on account of Cais, for he had vexed him, and disturbed the entertainment. When Antar reached his mother's tent, she hung upon him and wept from excess of joy and love.

Now King Cais had been greatly distressed at this interruption; but Rebia soothed his heart, saying, It is quite impossible that my brother and Antar can ever meet in the same place again; but I have in my heart something I should wish to do. Thus they continued over their cups of wine and conversing, and made Hadifah and Haml drink, and loaded them with all manner of favours. Thus it continued whilst the day withdrew its light, and

the night shaded them in its darkness till morning, when Hadifah and his brother returned home.

But Rebia and his brothers quitted the tents, and, together with their dependants, descended into the valley of Yamooriyah, also accompanied by their horsemen and warriors, and those who hated Antar, that they might seek the means of annoying him. As soon as this circumstance was made known to King Cais, he disregarded it, and cursing them, Wherever they go, cried he, may death overtake them! And thus he cast them from his heart, saying to the Arab chiefs that surrounded him, Ye know, my cousins, that King Zoheir admitted Antar to our birth and parentage, and called him cousin, and accepting him as such, he raised him to honour and legitimacy. Now, whenever Amarah and Antar meet, they quarrel and disturb the union of the tribe; and should they remain separate, it will be better than their living together. Antar every day associated with King Cais, and attached himself to him, and thus they continued many days and nights. But Antar, on his arrival, having heard what had passed between his uncle Malik and his wife, and how he had attempted to kill her, remained entirely with his mother. In the mean time, King Cais became very anxious for the termination of the year, on account of Khalid, son of Giafer, who, he understood had thrown himself on Direed, son of Samah, chief of the tribes of Howazin, and Jeshm and Hamadan, and had induced him to pro-

mise his assistance with ten thousand horsemen against the tribe of Abs.

This Direed was four hundred and fifty years old, and by the Arabs he was called the Mill-stone of War. He was referred to on every difficult point, on account of his great age, and his orders were obeyed among the Arabs like King Numan's. So when King Cais heard this, he was in dismay: This, he cried, is indeed complete ruin! He then assembled the Absian chiefs, and consulted about what he should do. Comfort your mind and brighten your eye, exclaimed they all, for were Khalid to come against us with the armies of Chosroe, we will fight till we die in your presence. O King, said Antar, easy let it lie on thee, and on the sepulchre of King Zoheir! I will disperse the armies of our foes, and will not leave one of them alive. The words of Antar revived him, and feeling re-assured: O Aboolfawaris, said he, you indeed can speak and act!

From that day they made preparations for war, and searched for arms; but only finding a small quantity, Cais consigned the country to the care of Antar, and leaving his uncle in his place, he took a noble string of he and she camels, and resolved on selling them, in order to purchase with their produce some arms and weapons. He set out for Medina Yathreb, for that was the nearest place, and its chief was called Ajijah, son of Jellah; the Yathrabee; and he was the brother of Abdool-motallab on the mother's side; and between him

and King Cais there existed a friendship of long standing, from the time of his father King Zoheir ; and when King Cais reached Medina Yathreb, Ajijah was much pleased, and received him very kindly. Cais related his adventures, and that he was come to purchase arms. Now Cais having heard that Ajijah had a coat of mail of the workmanship of David, and exquisitely riveted, whose like no one possessed ; he addressed him, saying, O Chief, I have heard that you have a coat of mail made by David, which I am anxious to purchase, that in it I may go against my enemies, and I will give you its value instead. O Cais, said Ajijah, I would have given it you, but Khalid has already asked me for it, and praised me in his verses. What are the verses, said Cais, in which he praised you ? Let me know them ; and Ajijah thus repeated :

“ When I demanded a favour from the race of
“ Yathreb, Ebe Amroo cried out, and Ajijah con-
“ sented. Remain under the protection of a Yath-
“ rabee, for if thou stayest there, a shadow will
“ even dread thy power. I saw a man, over the
“ brilliancy of whose countenance was a vizor, by
“ which the sun was hid or shone. I have a
“ station in glory, in honour, and on high, but his
“ mansion is above the two Pisces. If he brandishes
“ his sword on the day of horrors, thou mayest see
“ the rays of his sabre flashing with death ; and were
“ his hand and the cloud impregnated with rain, to
“ exhibit their bounties, his beneficence would en-
“ dure, and the cloud desist. In his house every

“fugitive is safe, and with his donations he even satisfies the unsatiable. Virtues were of old in Jellah, and since him Ajijah has imitated him.”

On hearing these verses, Cais was astonished at their import and allusion: By the faith of an Arab, said he, I cannot blame or reproach you. Cais remained with Ajijah till morning, and having purchased all the arms he wanted, Ajijah questioned him, saying, O Cais, have you purchased the arms? Yes, said he. Well then, said Ajijah, bid now for the coat of mail. Cais was pleased; but said, By the faith of an Arab, of all my trifling articles, I have now only remaining one hundred camels: so take them, whether it be much or little, and excuse me for the deficiency. On this, he sent for the coat of mail, and it was of great length in the skirts. Take it, O Cais, said he, let it be considered as a purchase made for a hundred she-camels, though, in fact, it is a present from me to you. So he took one of the she-camels out of the hundred, and restored the remainder to Cais, who was very grateful, and in three days, having procured every thing he wanted, he took leave of Ajijah, and setting out for his own country, he reached the valley of Yamouriyeh, whence he sent home his arms with his slaves, and proceeded unattended to Rebia, who, being told of his arrival, met him, and complimented him, receiving him hospitably, and making him welcome. In the course of conversation, Cais asked his advice about his attacking Khalid and the Aamirites. My cousin, said Rebia, we are all yours, and at your

disposal. But whither have you been travelling? I have been to Medina Yathreb to purchase some arms. And where, said Rebia, are your purchases? I have sent them home, said Cais, with the slaves. Rebia stared about, and at last espied his portmanteau, which was full. O my cousin, said he, what is in your portmanteau? Cais laughed. O my cousin, said he, there is in it what would surprise you indeed, were you to see it. Let me see it then, said Rebia. Cais alighted and took out the coat of mail of Ajijah, and opened it before Rebia, who was astonished. O Cais, said he, whence came you by this? This is, said he, the coat of mail of Ajijah, son of Jellah, the Yathrabee, and he has made me a present of it. O Cais, said he, if that man made you a present of any thing, it must be invaluable; and Rebia stood up and put on the coat of mail, and though he was very tall, it came down to his heels. He walked away with it and entered the tents; then rushing out with a drawn sword in his hand, he cried out to Cais, This is my coat of mail! it was stolen from me, and there are my marks on it, this very flaw in the sleeves; and if you do not tell me all about it, I will sue you for it, and he recited these verses:

“ O Cais, my coat of mail I never sold, neither
“ did I give it away; it was stolen from me by some
“ of the Arab hordes: I am not one that speaks
“ falsehoods—no; by the truth of Him who is con-
“ cealed from sight! It happened by chance there
“ was a flaw on it, and it will serve as a proof on

“all points. By God, were you not nearly related to me, I would bring down death upon you, even in the month of Rejib.”

Cais was stupefied for a time: Son of Zeead, he said, what outrage is this? Dost wish to purloin my coat of mail by such a frivolous pretence? And thus he expressed himself:

“Wretch! thou wouldst purloin my coat of mail by fraud, by foul accusations and falsehoods: the coat of mail belonged to Ajijah, son of Jellah, the Yathrabee. Talk not such nonsense; thou art no more a child. By the truth of Him who spread the wings of nocturnal obscurity, I will not give it up, were even my father alive.”

* Upon this, they disputed violently in words, and a serious quarrel ensued, and they abused each other most virulently. The Arabs assembled round them, but Cais was unable to contend with Rebia and his Arabs, for he was alone. So he calmed them with his words, whilst the family of Zeead laughed at him. Away, O Cais, said Amarah, to your family; we will restore it to you, but should it happen that we do not return it, send to us your champion Antar, son of Shedad; let him come here and rescue it from these horsemen.

Cais, being now aware they only sought to quarrel and provoke him, mounted his camel and returned home. He hastened to his wife, Rebia's daughter, and said to her, If I abandon my coat of mail to your father, all the Arabs will accuse me of imbecility over the deserts and the wastes, and will re-

* This quarrel is an historical fact.

duce me to infamy and disgrace. O my father, cried his daughter Jemanah (and she was the most beautiful of the daughters of Arabia; she could even compose poetry, so that she was quite a proverb), I will restore to you your coat of mail, for my grandfather Rebia is very fond of me. Do so, O Jemanah, said her father, do what you please.

Upon this she mounted her camel, and taking a slave with her, she went to the valley of Yamoor, where, as she entered the tent of her grandfather, he stood up to receive her, and saluting her, treated her with the greatest kindness, saying, What has brought thee hither, O Jemanah? I am come, replied she, on account of my father's coat of mail. Here I am; send me not back disappointed, for I am thy favourite. Yes, said Rebia, in his wily manner, when I have fought Khalid with it, I will return it to him. Jemanah, perceiving that he would persist in his obstinacy, thus addressed him:

“ My father will not permit that his coat of mail
“ should be purloined from him, and my grand-
“ father consents to purloin the coat of mail from
“ my father. My father's judgment is the judgment
“ of a prudent and cautious man; but the conduct
“ of my grandfather is the conduct of an oppressor
“ and a tyrant. The son of Zoheir will not give up
“ his coat of mail, neither will the son of Zeead yield
“ to salutary counsel. O Cais, this coat of mail was
“ left with thee, as an act of generosity, for the bat-
“ tle that turns infants grey: so I fear that Antar,
“ who plunges into the horse-dust, will not yield it.”

As soon as Jemanah had finished she departed, and repaired to her father. May God be with thee, O my father ! said she : if it be possible for thee to resign the coat of mail, give it up ; for now that he has denied me, he will resign it to no one. And if thou dost dispute with him, he will dispute with thee ; and if thou wilt fight with him, he will fight with thee : thus will the tranquillity of the tribe be dissolved. Very well, said Cais. But the news soon spread about the dwellings of the Absians, and it came at last to Antar, who was exceedingly indignant, and went to King Cais, to whom he said, How ! hast thou been cajoled by thy enemies ? and thou the king of the age ! and canst thou submit to such disgrace and infamy ? If thou art willing to have thy coat of mail rescued, I will soon redeem it for thee, ay, before to-morrow's dawn, were it even on the back of the driving clouds. I will slay that Rebia, and Amarah, and the whole race of Zeead. It was on this very account, said King Cais, I would not inform you of it. And he told him all that had passed with the family of Zeead, and how Amarah had said, Hie thee hence, and send us thy champion Antar, son of Shedad.

Without word or comment Antar retired home, and called out for Shiboob, who instantly appeared. O son of my mother ! he cried, I wish thee to tell me how I must manage, for King Cais has been cajoled by Rebia, and my heart is in an agony at the words of Amarah, for he even said to Cais, Hie thee away ; send us thy champion Antar, to rescue

thy coat of mail from hence. My advice is, said Shiboob, that we proceed to the valley of Yamoor, and that we hide ourselves near the tents of the Zeead family. No doubt some one of them will fall into our hands: we will take him prisoner, and we will not desist tormenting him, till we ransom him for the coat of mail of Ajijah.

That's just the thing, said Antar; and they waited till evening, when they set out for the valley of Yamoor, where, lo! they saw in front of them a fellow lying asleep, and before him stood a horse. Shiboob went up to him, and struck him with a stick over the back of his head. He instantly awoke, and much alarmed he was. Eh! said Shiboob, who art thou? My lord, said the fellow, whilst he shook as if in an ague—my lord, said he, I am no horseman. I am no great man; but I am the slave of the magnanimous Chief Amarah. And where is Amarah? said Shiboob. My lord, said he, he is just passed over to the tents of the Carad family, just to have a look at his beloved Ibla, the daughter of Malik; and this has been his practice for a long time every night, and when he reaches this spot, he puts on my clothes, and disguises himself in them, and enters their tents. Ay! said Shiboob, I did not know a word of all this. Accursed be ye both; come, arise, strip off thy clothes, before I cut off thy head.

The slave had just stripped off his clothes, when Antar came up, and smote the slave with Dharni on the neck, and severed his head from his body. In-

stantly Shiboob put on the slave's clothes, and laid himself down in his place, whilst Antar hid himself near at hand for an hour, when lo ! advanced Amarah. As soon as the horse saw him, he neighed : I am come to thee, thou neigher ! said Amarah, now that I have beheld my beloved. And he came up to Shiboob, thinking it was his slave, and struck him with his stick on the back of the head, saying, Get up, son of an accursed mother, come, strip off the clothes before morning overtakes us.

So Shiboob turned about, and began rubbing his eyes, like one roused out of his sleep, and appeared as if about to take off his clothes, whilst Amarah, having stripped off his clothes, stood naked. At the instant, Antar sprung upon him, and grasped him by the small of his belly, and raising him in his arm, he dashed him against the ground, and then turned to upon him with a whip, till he made the blood start from every part of his body. In short, the agony of this chastisement was so acute, that Amarah fainted. Shiboob came up to him and bound his shoulders, and tied down his arms and sides, and hoisting him on the back of his horse, carried him away. O Arabs, cried Amarah, cover my shame, and if ye are from a distant land, and in quest of property and gain, congratulate yourselves on your success : for I am no paltry fellow ; I am the Chief Amarah, son of Zeead, and my party is near at hand ; and if you do not sell my life for cattle, you will heartily repent ; for my friends will

rescue me without ransom or goods at all. But Antar stood before him, and turned to again with his whip on his body, till his very liver was on fire. Ay, said he, I will redeem the coat of mail with thee, which thy brother took away. Yes! thou saidst to King Cais, Hie thee away! send us thy champion Antar, son of Shedad; let him come and redeem the coat of mail from us here. Then indeed Amarah recognised the dreadful Antar, and he cried out, Pardon, my cousin, pardon! for that is true virtue; don't, now don't punish me, O my cousin, for the flippancies of the tongue; and be sure of every favour you can desire. No more talk! cried Antar, till we reach the tents, where I will contrive every variety of torture for thee; and they drove him on before them to the tents, whilst Amarah endured such a night, as he never experienced before, and when they arrived, every one being asleep, Antar confined Amarah at his mother's: and he appeared in the morning as if nothing had happened.

In the course of the day, Rebia learnt that his brother was missing. He wept, and so did his brothers, and also his mother, and his relations, and there was not one but said Antar had killed him. I rather think, said Rebia, that Cais has set spies and scouts over us on account of the coat of mail of Ajijah, and has seized an Arab in order to redeem it with him. But, by the faith of an Arab, that's what I'll never do. I will, however, plant spies over them, and every one that falls into my power

I will slay: I will carry on for ever a rooted enmity against Cais, and I will aid the Aamirites against him, that he may feel my power; and if Antar has slain Amarah, no one will I put to death as an equivalent but Cais himself, that he may know that one like me will not sacrifice his retaliation for him.

Soon the account of the disappearance of Amarah became public; it was also reported to King Cais, that Rebia accused him of the deed, and that he had stationed spies and scouts over them, that should he be able to seize any one, he might kill him. By the faith of an Arab, said Cais, Rebia lies in what he says; and as to Amarah, he has no enemy but Antar; and Antar has never been absent from the tents. Moreover, I cannot believe he would put him to death, for his mercy is ever superior to his wrath. He has overcome him a thousand times, and has never attempted to murder him; there need be no alarm on that score, he will certainly re-appear: never let it be said, that my cousins are become my enemies, though I am of opinion, we should be on our guard against them.

Thus he recommended the business to his brothers. Go out by turns, said he to them, and protect the pastures, otherwise Rebia may suddenly surprise us. So Malik every day went out on horseback with the cattle, taking with him a body of men, and when Antar understood this, said he to Shiboob, Eh! son of my mother, it appears King Cais then is afraid of Rebia, and he thinks he will join the tribe of Aamir

against him. But as he will not permit me to act against him, what I wish of you is, to go out every day to the pastures, and if you see Rebia, or any one of his family, advance, hasten to me with the news, that I may show you what I will do. Shi-boob acquiesced, and went every day to the pastures, concealing himself where no one could see him.

After this, Antar visited Prince Malik, and imparted to him all about Amarah; that he was suffering torments with him, and was almost dead, and he wants to ransom himself for the coat of mail, but don't believe him; and I have not yet punished him enough. O Aboolfawaris, said Prince Malik, overjoyed, kill him whilst the business is a secret. O my lord, said Antar, I have never killed one of the tribe, and should the circumstance reach your brother Cais, that I have exercised my power against his cousin, as long as he lives, he will never be reconciled to me.

Thus passed three or four days, when lo! shouts arose from the pastures. Antar was sitting in his tent, when behold Shi-boob entered; Arise, my brother, he cried; come to your friend Prince Malik, or Rebia will slay him; he has surprised him in the pastures, with seventy horsemen of his family. The moment Antar heard this, the light became darkness in his eyes; he roared and bellowed, and sprung off the ground on the back of Abjer, and set out for the pastures, Shi-boob going on before. He stared about for his friend Malik, and seeing

him hemmed in with the horse of the family of Zeead, and almost overpowered, he shouted—the earth and the barren waste trembled, and the horse-men shrunk back from the contest. How came this dæmon here? cried Rebia, and he precipitated himself from the sand-mound, and penetrating the dust, wished to attack the dreadful Antar, when lo! his brother Anis appeared, bent double over his saddle, whimpering out, This shepherd-slave has broken my ribs, (for Antar had, indeed, with the butt end of his spear, broken his ribs, and had yelled at him, so he wheeled off in flight, fearful of death).

Rebia slackened his bridle and shouted out to his friends; when lo! some rushed, disordered in flight, from beneath the dust: alarmed at death and destruction, they fell back on their rear, and the fugitives were followed by their comrades. Rebia also retreated. But Antar cast his eyes at him, and beheld the coat of mail of Ajijah. Whither wouldst thou, O Rebia? cried he, and immediately he was up with him, and shouted at him; every limb of him quaked; he pierced his horse through a tender part, and the animal stumbled and threw him off; he endeavoured to rise up, but he tottered and fell with the weight of the Ajijah coat of mail. Antar drew forth Dhami from the scabbard, and was in the act of extending his arm. Hold! O my cousin, cried Rebia, pardon! for that is the true generosity of nature; you are our cousin, and the reliever of our sorrows. May God, said Antar, make thee die and

let thee not live, for never dost thou name me cousin, but when thou art under the scimitar's edge. In the feasts and entertainments I am still the slave, the carrion born ! Strip off that coat of mail, or I'll strike off thy head with this sword, by the life of the eyes of Ibla, to me the most binding of oaths. Rebia instantly obeyed ; he pulled off the coat of mail, and delivered it to him, and then fled in haste away, scarcely crediting his escape from death. Thus Antar accomplished his hopes and wishes, and taking the coat of mail with him, he returned to Prince Malik ; and, as they were retiring, King Cais came forward with a numerous body of Absians ; for, having heard the circumstance from some shepherds, he instantly mounted, alarmed for Malik. Seeing him safe and well, he inquired what had happened ; he told him what Antar had done to the family of Zeead ; how he had redeemed the coat of mail and the cattle. After which, Antar presented him the coat of mail, for which Cais thanked him, and they returned to the tents, rejoicing in their success. As to Rebia, he retreated, routed and discomfited on all sides, and sought his tents and habitations ; and when he considered himself secure, he collected his companions and rebuked them, saying, My cousins, you indeed failed to aid me at the very moment I needed you most. O Rebia, said they, what dost thou desire of us ? Dost wish us to fight against our cousins, and raise hostilities against our king ? Many of them are the husbands of our daughters

and our sisters. Has it not satisfied thee, that we have followed thee to this place, but thou must urge us to contend in battle against those who are the dearest of human beings to us? In this point never will we obey thee. If such is your resolution, said Rebia, return to your families, for I can do very well without you; and he called out to his brothers, and ordered them to depart for the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as Hadifah heard of his arrival, he went forth to meet him, and received him honourably, saluting him, and congratulating him, and accommodating him with a portion of ground, wide and extensive, and inquired his reason for quitting the tribe of Abs. Rebia told him what had passed, and what he had suffered at the loss of Amarah. Your settlement, said Hadifah, in the valley of Yaamoor, was not judicious; had you come to us, we would have exerted our utmost in league with you. But as to your brother Amarah, it must be all owing to Antar, son of Shedad. O chief, said Rebia, our misfortunes always proceed from that despicable slave, and we have no other enemy but him. I must indeed contrive his death, were my life to be annihilated, and all my brothers to be slain. That night came back Amarah, and he was in a most deplorable wretched plight, tiled over with filth and ordure. And when he told his brothers all the horrors he had endured, they were in utter dismay, and greatly augmented was their rage and indignation against Antar, the lion warrior. O my son, said his mother,

will you never relinquish your stubborn violence on account of Ibla and Antar? Are you not satisfied with the calamities and misfortunes that have already befallen you? O my mother, by your dear life, said he, death itself would be more tolerable to me, than what I have endured these days. I have experienced tortures from Antar, in my life, I never felt such from all the Arabs. Wait patiently for us, my fine fellow, said Rebia, that we may open a door for the destruction of Antar. Thus Rebia remained, consulting some plan, till the news of Khalid's departure on his expedition reached him, and that he had thrown himself on Direed, son of Samah, who had sent with him his brother Abdallah, with twenty thousand horsemen, and that the whole of the army of the Aamirites, when complete, would amount to forty thousand men, twenty thousand of which would march against the tribe of Abs, and twenty thousand, under the command of Abdallah, would march to attack the tribe of Fazarah. Hadifah was confounded and bewildered, and sent for Rebia, to consult with him; but they told him he was absent, and that, a short time ago, he had taken away his brothers, with forty slaves, and had proceeded to destroy Antar. Oh! what will become of us? he exclaimed; What will become of Rebia and his brothers? And he sent to request assistance of Harith, son of Zalim, and the horsemen of the tribe of Marah. The news also reached King Cais and the Absians. He was astounded and stupefied, and

assembling the chiefs, told them of Khalid, and the Aamirites, and Abdallah, Direed's brother, and asking for Antar, they told him he was absent. King Cais sent to procure intelligence of his mother, who said to the messenger, a crier cried out to him in the night, and with him he departed. On hearing this, King Cais was unable to distinguish light from darkness. Truly, Antar, he cried, has disappeared at the moment he was most required; and he consulted with the Absians about what he should do. Comfort your heart and brighten your eye, O king, said they, for by the faith of an Arab, we must fight for you, till by our acts we have settled your affairs to your satisfaction, and we will not die but in the presence of our families and our wives. My wish, cousins, said King Cais, is to send to the tribe of Fazarah, and to ask them to come to us, that we may be a united force against our foes. My opinion, said his brother Malik, is, that you be not cajoled by them any more; ask no aid of them, for Rebia is with them. So, my brother, stand staunch for your dignity, and let not your honour and reputation be sacrificed. However, they agreed to send a messenger to Hadifah; he departed for the tribe of Fazarah, where Hadifah was anxiously expecting the return of Rebia, much terrified at the treacheries of fortune. In a short time came Rebia, and his brother Amarah, and some more of his brothers; but as to his slaves, not one of them, black or white, accompanied them. He had entered the tents by

night, and the next day he went to Hadifah and saluted him. Hadifah inquired about his absence. O chief, said he, I have slain Antar, but with him were forty of my slaves killed. O Rebia, cried Hadifah, much rejoiced at Antar's death, a man, when he is engaged in the destruction of his foe, must expend his property, great as it may be. The reason of this was, that when Rebia repaired to Hadifah, and was joined by Amarah, who told him what he had suffered, he consoled his brother's heart, and remained quiet till the next day, when he took away his brothers, and forty slaves, and repaired with them to the land of the Absians, where he halted in a valley, and concealing himself, he sent a horseman to Antar to supplicate his assistance, and to conduct him to the valley. The horseman proceeded till he came nigh to the tents of Antar, when he cried out, O Chief Antar, I am a suppliant for thy assistance. Antar instantly ordered Shiboob to prepare Abjer; he brought him out bitted and bridled. Antar sprung from the ground, on his back, and took Shiboob before him, and followed the horseman, who had begged his protection; and he did not discontinue following him, till he was far from the tents. As to the noble Arabs in those days, when any one demanded their protection, no one ever inquired what was the matter; for if he asked any questions, it would be said of him that he was afraid. The poets of those days have thus described them in verse :

“ They rise, when any one in fear calls out to them, and they haste before asking any questions ; they aid him against his enemies that seek his life, and they return honoured to their families.”

Poets have also thus mentioned those who do make inquiries of him who asks their protection :

“ They dispute about the protection on frivolous pretences, and they lengthen out the conversation in questions, and when a suppliant calls out to them in the desert, they snore, or else make themselves acquainted with the business.”

When Antar was at some distance from the tents, O young Arab, he cried, console thy heart, and brighten thine eye, but tell me now what is the matter, for were thine enemy Chosroe, I would make his balcony totter ; if it be the Roman Emperor, I will slay his warriors. O Aboolfawaris, replied the man, stopping, I am of the tribe of Shiban, and with me were my wife and my daughter ; I was on a visit to one of my brothers, and when my visit was concluded, I was on my way home ; and on reaching your waters, twenty horsemen rushed out upon me ; they wounded me, and took captives my wife and daughter. I fled, as you see ; and when I heard of your name, and that you were noble and generous, I came to you, and I begged your protection. March on forwards, said Antar, pitying him from his heart ; console thy mind, dispel thy fear and alarm. The horseman continued to gallop on ahead of Antar, till he conducted him to the valley, where Rebia had

drawn ropes among the trees for Antar's horse ; and when Antar was in the middle of the valley, Rebia's slaves rushed upon him, crying out, Where art thou now ? Vile slave, how wilt thou escape hence ? The light became dark in Antar's eyes, but he galloped towards the fellow who had begged his protection, and pierced him through the chest with his spear, and drove it quivering out through his back ; he shouted at his foe ; he attacked, and bounded away on his horse. But his horse being entangled among the cords that Rebia had fastened, Antar dismounting from Abjer, and grasping Dhami in his right, and his shield in his left hand, fought on foot. As soon as Shiboob saw this dreadful disaster, and his brother's awkward situation, he felt assured some stratagem had been contrived against him, so he drew forth his dagger and killed four of the slaves, and Antar slew ten. But they multiplied upon him, shouting and throwing stones at him, and bellowing at him, till they nearly destroyed him ; his limbs were unnerved, and he felt his calamity, when lo ! another stone fell between his shoulders, and threw him at his full length on the ground. Rebia's slaves pounced upon him, and bound him with cords, and tied down his arms and sides ; they seized hold of Shiboob, and bound his arms also with ropes. Bring him to us at the division of the road, cried Rebia, that we may play with our swords through their bodies. Antar recognized Rebia, and the despicable Amarah. Verily, O Rebia, said Antar,

thou hast contrived well ; this is a masterly plot indeed. But whilst they were in this state, lo ! a dust arose, and there appeared five hundred horsemen in armour. Go thou to Antar, cried Rebia, to Amarah, as the dust approached, whilst I kill Shiboob ; then let us be off, or death will come upon us. Amarah assented, and galloping up to Antar, drew his sword with his left hand. Antar was tied on the back of Abjer ; Amarah lifted up his hand to strike him ; but just as he heaved up his arm with his sword, Abjer started under Antar, and sprung forth like a flash of lightning, and made towards the horses that were advancing towards them, for he had been trained by his master, whenever he saw a troop of horse, to seek it, before they could seek him. Fly, O noble fellow, fly, roared out Rebia, or death and perdition will overtake us. Shiboob was dragged along by a slave, but as soon as he saw his brother, and how Abjer had started away beneath him, he disengaged himself from the hands of the slave who led him, and followed his brother Antar, that he might know all the evil he had suffered. As to Rebia, he fled, followed by his brothers. The troop of horse assaulted the remainder of the slaves, and tossing them upon their spears, stretched them dead upon the ground. They afterwards surrounded Antar in the barren desert. Now these horsemen were Arabs of the tribe of Khoolan, and their chief was a warrior, named Moshajaa, son of Hosan, and

he was one of the famed haughty tyrants, and celebrated knights of the age. As soon as he saw Antar, he recognized him, and cried out to his comrade warriors, O my cousins, slay not this devouring hero; for this hero is called Antar, son of Shedad. I know that our King Safwan has a retaliation against him, for he killed two of his sons; and it is my opinion that we should take him away, and go with him to our dwellings: there casting him into fetters and chains, let us proceed to our King Safwan, and receive from him an immense reward in cattle, in exchange for this lion Antar. As they assented to his advice, they took Antar and Shiboob, and set out on their way home.

Now Rebia and Amarah, as they fled, turned behind to look at the tribe of Khoolan; and perceiving that they had surrounded Antar and Shiboob, and had drawn their swords upon them, they imagined they had slain them; so they eagerly pursued their way till they reached the land of Fazarah and joined Hadifah, to whose inquiries about their absence they related what we have already stated. Hadifah was in ecstasies of joy, and thought Antar must be slain, and his limbs cut in pieces.

In the mean time, the tribe of Khoolan travelled with speed till they reached their own country, where they cast Antar and Shiboob into chains, and stationed a guard of slaves over them. But

Moshajaa, with a party of his tribe, repaired to King Safwan, to give him the good tidings of the fall of Antar, the conquering warrior.

The very day that Rebia arrived, and felicitated Hadifah on the death of Antar, came also King Cais's messenger to order Hadifah to march to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, that they might all form an united force. But when he consulted with Rebia upon this subject, No, Chief Hadifah, said he, let Cais and the tribe of Abs settle with their foes as they like; for this once we are stronger than they. Cais has now lost Antar: let the enemy kill him, and make him drink of the cup of death and misery. Hadifah accordingly sent back the messenger disappointed, saying, Tell Cais to arrange his own matters as he can, he and the champion of his country, Antar, son of Shedad; for never shall there be any hostile dispute between us and the tribe of Aamir. The messenger returned to Cais, and told him what Hadifah had said; on which Cais, feeling the truth of his brother Malik's advice, assembled the tribe of Abs, and ordered them to prepare for battle, for he had heard that Khalid was in the neighbourhood. They obeyed, and prepared that very day. King Cais then sent for the tribe of Ghitfan, who came the next day, with Hatal, son of Antar's sister, and four thousand horsemen, all spear-armed heroes.

In three days the Absians and Ghiftanians were equipped, to the number of eight thousand horse-

men, all in coats of mail and in 'armour. My cousins, said King Cais, I am of opinion we should march and meet the Aamirites in the road, before they reach our lands. They assented, and set out to meet the tribe of Aamir; and when their whole army was complete, it amounted to seven thousand men, as one thousand were left to protect the cattle and families. Thus they continued their journey till evening, when King Cais alighted: Now, said he to his cousins, I think we ought not to separate beyond this distance from our wives; otherwise we may have cause to fear for them on account of the enemy. There they remained till morning, when behold! the horses' fronts burst upon them. This was a troop of the tribe of Aamir; the bickering scimitars and Semherian spears glittered. Shouts arose, and the horsemen were eager for the fight and contest. The Absians called out in their patronymics; the spears were interwoven one within the other; the crowds pressed on violently; the rush of the combatants was terrific, and the behests of fate and destiny descended upon them. Rise to arms! to arms! cried Khalid. The Brandisher of Swords exhibited his activity beneath the dust; the cleaving sabres were at work; and the cleft skulls were hewn off. It was a day of dreadful portent, and the Absians felt not secure till the light fled, and the night came on in darkness, when they retired from the army that had thus surprised them; and they saw tribes, the like of which they

had never seen in all their lives. Now, said King Cais to his people, let us return to our wives; it will be the most expedient measure, for I fear some of these tribes may invade our homes, and devastate our dwellings. We have nothing to do but to march before the darkness passes away; for this is indeed an event of fate, and our affairs are in a dreadful condition.

They arose accordingly by night, and set out for their own tents. The enemy was soon aware of it. Khalid gave a shout, and they were all in movement by dawn. The Absians reached their dwellings, and the women shrieked in excess of fear and terror; and when they saw the Absian army return, their screams of woe and distress increased, and became still louder, alarmed as they were at dishonour and infamy. In an hour the action commenced; heads were scattered about; the party was panic-struck, and their rapacious designs were frustrated. The women screamed out to the lion-warriors, and Ibla beat her sides and wept. All the maidens of the tribe assembled like full moons; they uncovered their faces, and let their hair flow dishevelled; they cried out, and exciting them to the contest, they exclaimed, O cousins, where is the valiant warrior? where is he who would protect the women on such a day as this? Then Gheshm, son of Malik, attacked and performed dreadful deeds. They continued in this state till evening came on, and the two armies were separated from each other.

The Absians were discomfited that day, for two hundred of their most renowned warriors were slain. On that night the wailings of the children, and the screams of the women and men, increased; and shrill above the rest rose the shrieks of Ibla, for the loss of Antar, the undaunted hero. Cais himself remained in the greatest affliction. As to the tribe of Fazarah, their condition was similar to that of the Absians; for Abdallah, the brother of Direed, assaulted them with twenty thousand horsemen, and rushed upon them from all sides. The Fazareans engaged them till they were near death and extinction; and had not Harith, the son of Zalim, been with them, they would have been cut up and destroyed; for one noble Knight, when he was with a weak party, could defend it, and steadied it against the enemy. Rebia, too, fought with his brothers firmly and resolutely, though he was also anxious that Cais's inability should be proved; for he knew well Antar was not present in the engagement.

But the tribe of Abs continued to fight with the Aamirites for three days; on the fourth day the foe routed them in the tents, and possessed themselves of their fountains and waters, having completely overpowered them with superior numbers. Good fortune and fear prevailed alternately; heroes exposed their lives to death, for they saw no rescue from destruction; the armies of Aamir thronged upon them like the foaming billows of the ocean,

driving them out of their dwellings. The Absians fortified themselves on the sandhills and Mount Saadi. O my cousins, said King Cais, let us lengthen out the battle with the foe; perhaps one of the heroes of Hijaz may still come to our aid: so they acted in conformity with his commands. But the one who that day was the chief victor over the Absians was the Brandisher of Spears; he had taken fifty brave horsemen prisoners, besides those he had wounded and slain. The army was protected by his intrepidity, and Khalid gloried in his exploits. The last that challenged the Brandisher of Spears was the Chief Shedad; and as he was on the mountain side he remembered his son Antar, and thus he mourned his death:

“ Was it seen what arrow of all the arrows
 “ of calamity pierced thee, thou son of the noble
 “ and generous? Who was the warrior whose arm
 “ could strike thee, and thy arm so irresistible in
 “ its blows among the horsemen? Art thou to be
 “ seen dead, laid low on the ground? Shall the
 “ wild beasts of the desert prowl about thee on all
 “ sides? In truth, the tribe has lost in thee a
 “ Knight equal to a host of foot or of horse. Thou
 “ couldst repulse the troopers, and, eager as they
 “ were, they were deprived of their warriors on
 “ the day of trial. O my son, since thy absence
 “ from us, the hostile troops have invaded us, like
 “ giant sea-monsters. Oceans have encompassed
 “ us, rolling in furious waves of the bitterness of

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“spears and two-edged scimitars. Our heroes have
“fallen into the power of the enemy, and our wo-
“men mourn in fear of death. We are enthralled
“by horrors, and our maidens are in despair, fearful
“of captivity. O son of the noble and generous !
“Ibla calls on thee from her ulcered heart, and
“weeps in torments of tears. Here I am come
“forth this day ; I will expose my life, and, aware
“of the catastrophe, I encounter the heroes ; for
“perhaps thou mayst still join us, and we still sur-
“vive by thy perseverance, thou protector of the
“wives of thy friends !”

When Shedad had finished, the Absian women shouted to encourage him to the fight and combat. Shedad descended, and his back was bent double with his great age, for he was like an ancient eagle. Who art thou, O Sheikh, cried the Brandisher of Spears, thus eagerly moving towards death, and drawing along the bridle of annihilation ? O Gheshm, replied he, dost thou not know me, that I am one of the illustrious warriors ? I am Shedad, son of Carad. I am a knight, the soul of the day of battle and combat ! I am the father of Antar, the destroyer of the stoutest tyrants ! Thou art a pusillanimous wretch, continued the other ; and immediately assailed him. Shedad encountered him, and there ensued so fierce a contest and combat that the noblest warriors were astonished at its fury. Their long spears were shattered in their hands ; they both disappeared from the sight, and were veiled from the eyes of the spec-

tators; again they exhibited in the contest the most skilful manœuvres, and the bravest were aghast at their deeds. They continued in this state till fatigue fell on the fingers of Shedad, for he was no match for Gheshm in feats of arms; and when the Brandisher of Spears saw this he assaulted him like a lion, and clung to the rings of his coat of mail and corslet, and dragged him off his horse's back, dashing him on the ground: his cousins tied down his shoulders, and bound him by the arms and sides. Now rose their shouts still louder at the captivity of Shedad, and their exertions failed, feeling certain of death and perdition. The Brandisher of Spears again returned to the skirts of Mount Saadi; Hola! tribe of Abs, he exclaimed, come forth, if there be any more of ye remaining; if not, surrender; for a surrender is your only resource. At hearing this, the Absians were more furiously enraged. O my cousins, cried Cais, there is no means of escaping death in the presence of these Arabs; and he resolved on the attack, but Nazih prevented him, and wished himself to challenge the Brandisher of Spears. Oorwah anticipated him, and as he recollected his friend Antar, his tears flowed; he hasted on, exclaiming, O champion of Abs, may God not divide from us thy stirrup! and may thy friends be never abandoned by thee! And he thus mourned the death of his friend Antar in these verses:

“The foul wretches have prevailed, O Aboolfawar, now thou art absent from the land of the

“tame fawn. The Arabs have surrounded our
“country, and they charge our heroes like fiends.
“The tribe has lost in thee a knight, who used to
“encounter our foes, smiling and unruffled. Thou
“wert our guardian, O champion of Abs! when
“every defender and protector failed us. Now thou
“art gone, we are ruined and lost; our supports
“have given way, and every one that sat down has
“risen up to oppose us. How many women bewail
“thee with eyeballs swimming in tears; and from
“eyelids that never slumber! How many of our
“warriors have been captured! and how many lie
“dead among the devastated habitations! There is
“no champion for the daughter of Malik, now
“thou art gone, thou disgracer of horsemen! Who
“now can encounter calamities, now thou art gone,
“or wear off the rust in the day of terrors? May
“God moisten the tomb where thou liest with
“the dew of the clouds, charged with never-failing
“showers!”

When Oorwah had finished, he rushed upon the Brandisher of Spears, and galloped beneath the thickening dust: there ensued a combat between them that made heroes shudder, and confounded the most resolute warriors. They continued in that state till their spears were shivered in their hands, and their souls were near expiring. Oorwah was a brave knight, and an undaunted man of arms, but in prowess he was no match for the Brandisher of Spears; so fatigue fell on the hands of Oorwah,

which his antagonist perceiving, rushed at him, and hemmed him in, and grasping him by the rings of his coat of mail, he clung to him, and took him prisoner, and dragging him along, miserable and abject, he delivered him over to his people, who pinioned and secured him. Oorwah being taken, the Absians gave up all for lost. King Cais threw his casque off his head, and cried out to his tribe and his comrades, O my cousins, after this there is no hope, no resource! their word against us is blood. They have vanquished us, and I well know they will not suffer one of us to live, not a black or a white. Let those who feel as I do, do as I do; and those that fear death retire to the rear; for our women are dishonoured, and the blood of our men is shed. Our horsemen are overcome, and our champion is lost: there is nothing left to protect us, or defend our wives, but the blades of our swords and the barbs of our spears. Thus saying, he galloped down from the sand-hills and Mount Saadi, surrounded by his brothers and warriors, and those who stood by him on all important occasions; and when they came to the spot they bent their heads over their saddle-bows, and in one universal shout exclaimed, O by Abs! O by Adnan! and they poured down on the Aamirites like a torrent of rain. Now, my cousins, come on! exclaimed Khalid, as he marked them. See these fellows! they scorn life. Tear out their souls; rejoice in the capture

of their women, and beautiful maidens, and the plunder of their abundant cattle. Then the armies and the troops assaulted, and made at the Absians in all directions, and assailed them with swords, and spears, and pointed lances. The plain was choked up; the associated heroes rushed on; horsemen were exhausted; the two forces were mixed promiscuously; the steeds danced to the sound of the lutes; blood streamed from the bodies; they persisted in these dangers and perils till midday, when the Absians were nearly destroyed, and extinguished, and extirpated; the women cried out to the Lord of Heaven; blood flowed; protectors and defenders were diminished; existence was annihilated; the Absians were lost amongst those armies and troops, and dust-clouds like an extended canopy. There was not one but exposed himself to every disaster, and courted death in the midst of the tumults; the plains appeared before them like mountains; the black dust ascended over them in columns, and they were clothed in garments of blood. Such was their perilous situation, they were nearly destroyed, and had resolved on flight, when lo! a dust arose, and closed up every passage of the country. It was not long ere the dust opened: there was seen the glitter of corslets, and the waving brilliancy of helmets, and innumerable horsemen, headed by a black knight, on a black steed, who bellowed out, Ignoble dastards! I am Antar, son

of Shedad; quit these women and children: and he instantly attacked the Aamirites, like a devouring lion, accompanied by his warrior-friends. In an instant the enemy was repulsed, and the twenty thousand were routed right and left. The cause of the release of Antar from captivity, and his arrival with the horsemen, was as follows.

CHAPTER XXX.

WHEN Antar fell a prisoner into the hands of the tribe of Khoolan, they took him to their own country, where Moshajaa confined him between four iron stakes, and stationed over him a party of slaves, saying to his companions, My cousins, this will we continue to do until we receive from our master the reward of our pains, and then we will deliver him up to him, that he may do what he pleases with him. And he instantly set out to King Safwan to congratulate him on the fall of Antar. But the women of the tribe of Khoolan having heard Antar's story, and learnt his punishment, and having marked the immensity of his bulk, and the horror of his form, went to look at him; but the last that entered was a very old woman, a stranger in that land, and as soon as she saw Antar she recognised him. She threw herself at his feet and kissed them, saying, May this accident be the cause of joy to me, O Aboolfawaris! How is it that the nocturnal wanderers of evil have surprised you, and cast you into prison and infamy? The women, on hearing these words, and seeing her kiss Antar's feet, were much astonished. Old woman, said Moshajaa's wife, who is this black slave, that you kiss his feet? May

God be with you, noble ladies, said she, call him not a black slave. By the faith of noble Arabs, men of truth, and honour, there is not on the face of the earth a braver man than this great warrior; nor among the Arab chiefs, or the most illustrious princes, is there one whose munificence is more unbounded, or whose benevolence is more exalted. As to his courage, said the women, we have heard of it; it was clear and evident: but what hast thou seen of his generosity, that thou shouldst thus praise him? I will tell you, said she, and I will relate an instance of his liberality. You all know my son; well! once on a time he surprised some she camels belonging to this young man, and took away about a thousand of them; but as he was returning home to be married to one of his cousins (it was his intention to make these camels her marriage dower), this man, black in skin, but fair in deeds and qualities, overtook him, and rescued his camels, and took my son prisoner, and went away with him to the tribe of Abs; and just as he was going to put him to death, he asked my son about his situation in life, and his Arab descent, and on what account he had plundered his camels. So my son told him he was in love with his cousin, and that it was only on her account he had seized the cattle. Upon this, he ran towards him, and released him, and gave him the thousand camels which he had plundered, and presented him, over and above, three hundred more, saying, When the property you have now in hand

fails come hither to me. My son returned delighted and happy ; and soon after married his cousin, and all his sorrows were removed. And now we are living under the aid of God and this youth, and there is not a tribe in the desert but is sensible of his liberality. The women being much astonished at the narrative of the old woman concerning Antar's generosity and benevolence, greatly extolled and honoured him, and then quitted him. They reposed in peace that night, but the next morning the tribe was invaded by a predatory party of horse, consisting of five hundred horsemen, all in coats of mail, and clothed in armour, with a warrior of the haughty tyrants of Arabia, called Mobadir. These warriors and horsemen rushed upon the tribe of Khoolan, whilst Mobadir cried out in a loud voice, O Mavia, for such a day as this have I been anxiously waiting on thy account ; and he rushed forward at the head of his heroes, pouncing down like the rush of a torrent. He attacked the tents, and brought down captivity among the dwellings. The cause of his arrival was this : he had long demanded in marriage the daughter of the chief of the tribe, who would not consent to marry her to him ; so he watched her father, till having heard that he was gone to King Safwan, he collected these heroes and horsemen, and came to seize her as his captive from beneath the glittering sabres. When the women were aware of this event, they trembled at captivity and infamy ; screams and shrieks arose ; but the

most dreadful calamity was in the dwellings of Mo-shajaa, for they had invaded it by force, and surrounded it with misery. There stood Mavia exclaiming, Alas! alas! captivity! Alas! alas! separation from home! This day the foe has vanquished us, and we are for ever clothed in shame. O noble ladies, said the old woman who had described Antar, in this catastrophe there is nothing to be done but to go to Antar and ask his aid, and demand his protection: he is able to destroy your enemies were they as numerous as the sands of the desert. To this they assented, and screaming aloud, went to the place where was Antar, the lord of battles. Among the first was Mavia, and as they threw themselves at his feet, O Aboolfawaris, they exclaimed, we are under thy protection, and the protection of Ibla, daughter of Malik: we have indeed heard that thou art noble-hearted towards women and maidens.

O Aboolfawaris, cried Mavia, kissing his hands, a calamity has overtaken us, and we implore thy assistance. And she related to Antar all that Mobadir had done to them, from first to last; and when, added she, he understood my father was absent, he came in order to seize me by the force of the cleaving scimitar; and now, O Aboolfawaris, we are between two perilous circumstances, and two deadly calamities; for we fear if we release you, you will avail yourself of the opportunity, and plunder our property, as well as that of the foe, and

then you will seek your own home, and no doubt you will be excused in doing so; for indeed you are near your death and every evil; but if we now quit you, this tyrant will destroy us, both us and you too. O Mavia, said Antar, console thy heart and brighten thine eye, I will rout these cowardly foes for thee, and I will disperse them among the wastes and the wilds, and I will then return to my fetters and my chains; and I will not depart hence but by the mutual consent of all your men and women; for generous men are not ungrateful, and they do not abuse fortune for exciting troubles against them. Know too that my captivity was only the effect of fate and destiny, from which no creature can escape or fly.

As soon as Mavia and the women heard this, they were convinced of victory and conquest. They ran towards him, and released him from his chains and fetters, and brought him his weapons for battle and carnage; As to your horse, said they, not one of us can venture to approach him. Release my brother Shiboob, said Antar, he is accustomed to him: (Shiboob had been bound close to him), so they set him at liberty. He went up to Abjer and saddled him and brought him to his brother Antar, who sprung from the ground on his back, after he had clothed himself in iron, and a magnificent coat of mail; in which he appeared like a strong battlement. And he assailed the foe with a heart undaunted at death and extinction: he shouted with his well

known shout in his wrath, Ignoble dastards, I am Antar, son of Shedad; quit the women and the children! and he attacked and transfixed the horsemen, and drove them round the skirts of the dwellings: at his second attack he repulsed them from the walls, and slew twenty of them, overwhelming them with shame and disgrace; he charged them like a trampling lion, fearless of multitudes, and thus expressed himself:

“ Whenever I go as a guest to a tribe, and they
“ be alarmed by their enemies, may I never grasp
“ a spear-staff in my hand, may sleep never seal up
“ my eyes! My captivity by the Shrine of God is
“ no fault; for I have been proved in the day of
“ battles. I was made prisoner by stratagem and
“ the destiny of God, whose power is infinite over
“ his slaves, whom he drives, in despite of every oppo-
“ sition, into bondage, either for their advantage or
“ destruction.”

As soon as Antar had finished, he assaulted the party, and dispersed their united bands, and routed the horsemen, and destroyed their warriors. When the chief saw Antar's exploits: Eh, bastard! said he, what Arab slave art thou? tell me before I cut off thy head, and extinguish thy life for thy opposition to the depredations of the warriors of the age. Mobadir had almost gained possession of the whole clan, and was pillaging the property. Base-born, cried Antar, knowest thou me not? and what noble hero I am? I am Antar, son of Shedad, the

conqueror of hardy warriors! Away to thy home! for as to the booty, I have rescued it from thy power; and if thou doubttest my word, come on—on to the plain—that I may make thee drink of the cup of infamy. Mobadir only laughed, and smiling, said, They say too, that thou art a man that deals fairly, but this day I see thou movest on the road of oppression. I am, said Antar, just what they say of me; but what is it thou requirest that I should do thee justice? Know then, said Mobadir, that I had nearly gained possession of the clan, and seized my beloved; but thou hast interrupted the accomplishment of my desires. Thou bastard, said Antar, thou hast demanded a man's daughter in marriage, but he will not accept thee for a husband; thou hast staid quiet till he was absent on some business, and now hast come in his absence to take her captive from beneath the glittering scimitars; and this is the justice with which thou hast acted towards him. Mobadir rushed at him, and wanted to charge in front of him, and gallop about; but Antar would not permit him even to wheel round, before he attacked him and stopped him in his charge, and checked him in his martial display, and aimed at him with Dhami between his eyes. Mobadir received the blow on his shield, but it cleft it in twain, and his casque it hewed in two, and the sabre still continued its course down to his thighs, even to the back of his horse, seven spans into the ground: thus he hurled him and his horse to the

ground in four equal divisions. Alas ! alas ! cried Mobadir's companions at the sight of this blow, this furious warrior must be one of the genii ; so saying, they fled, throwing away all the property they had acquired, and calling out to Antar, May God curse thy flat-nosed father and thy harlot mother ! how hard are thy blows ! how penetrating is thy thrust, and how fierce is thy assault ! Antar pursued them till he drove them out of that country, and afterwards returned to collect the scattered horses and dispersed arms. Shiboob attended him like one of the rebellious fiends till they reached the tribe of Khoolan.

Antar no sooner dismounted from Abjer than the women surrounded him, and kissed his hands and feet. Noble ladies, said Antar, return me now to my chains and fetters. But they said, By the faith of an Arab, nothing shall touch thy feet, instead of fetters, but the blessings of cheeks. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, that must never be, were I even to drink of the cup of death and perdition. Eh ! son of my mother, cried he to Shiboob, return me to my chains and fetters ; let it not be said that I have falsified my word. What ! said Shiboob, thou art surely mad. What ! now thou art at liberty, and hast vanquished thy captors, wilt thou again cast thyself into chains and fetters, and wait till some one comes to slay thee ? Yes ! said Antar, let me not sin against my oath ; let not a falsehood approach me. Shiboob, on hearing

this, was more and more enraged, and in a great passion came up to Antar, and fastened the weighty fetters on his feet. Well then, said he to him, lie there in base imprisonment, that thou mayest not sin against thine oath! But Antar did not remain in captivity longer than that night; for on the next day the Chief Moshajaa returned with his warriors, and as they came near to the tents, they saw the dead piled up among the dwellings and habitations. Moshajaa also beheld Mobadir's head fixed on the point of one of the tallest spears by the side of his tent. On inquiring about this, they told him what Antar had done. Moshajaa and his warriors were fixed in astonishment. By the faith of noble Arabs, said he, we shall never be able to requite this man by all we can do for him; for whilst we went to demand his death, he has done this deed for us; he has protected our wives and families, and has even returned himself to chains and fetters. Thus saying, they ran towards Antar, the lion warrior, and set him at liberty. Moshajaa fell down and kissed his feet, and bringing him into the middle of the tent, they clothed him in robes of honour, and presented him with riches, and begged his pardon for what they had done. O Chief, said one to Moshajaa, what answer will you make to King Safwan, to whom you have pledged your word? Cousin, said Moshajaa, where can there be a more complete excuse than this? Here is one who protected our wives

in our absence, and has done a deed no human being ever did before. After this they made preparations to accompany Antar, and to depart to the land of Abs. Moshajaa mounted with five hundred horsemen of the chiefs of his tribe.

Antar also set out on his way to the land of Shooreba and Mount Saadi, greatly pleased at the union with the tribe of Khoolan ; and as he marched at their head in great spirits, he thus recited :

“ Where is my love? my sport? my song? Be-
“ gone, my failings of my early youth! What was
“ expanded is now folded up. The matrons and the
“ large-eyed damsels shall keep me in remembrance ;
“ torture has not relaxed my powers in the battle,
“ and the lion stands in awe of me on the plain and
“ the mountain. It has not enervated me, and I
“ will not mourn in tears at home and my native
“ lands. In horses and black coursers is my de-
“ light ; love and wine are no more my occupations.
“ How can ambition raise any one to glorious emi-
“ nence, whose post is in talking of sports and
“ songs? My failing is in horses ; my boast is in their
“ hoofs ; when the lion hero moves on them, de-
“ spair moves with him. My Abjer blusters with
“ me on the day he bears me : is there a hero that
“ escapes me? or can a warrior touch me? How
“ many warriors have I put to flight in confusion,
“ meeting every form of death like a roaring tor-
“ rent! As to the dust, I have plunged into it,
“ high and low, with sword blows, and spear

“ thrusts, among scimitars and lances. I do not
“ intend that the tribe shall get drunk with my blood:
“ am I not their superior both in word and deed ?
“ Let no one drink blood but who has a forfeit due ;
“ and let him not repose, whose neighbour is in
“ trouble. The enemy cannot repel him with their
“ thrusts; he is replete with virtue, joyous with
“ wine. Were not Cais my King, and did I not
“ obey him, I would have drank of blood sweeter
“ than honey from Rebia and the wretch who re-
“ sists me on account of Ibla ; still I am in anxious
“ fears about her ; I am of the noble and illustrious
“ ones, ever renowned over the plains and the hills.
“ I wish to exterminate them, but my tenderness
“ prevents me, and I check my impatience. He
“ who wishes to be honoured as I am honoured,
“ let him pierce the warriors, or challenge the
“ heroes.”

The chieftains were astonished at his eloquence, and expressed the gratification they felt. May God never abandon thee ! may no one ever harm thee ! O knight of the age, and the result of the time and the period ! cried Moshajaa, for thou hast not left for any one either a word to speak or a deed to do. Thus they continued their march till they came near to the tribe of Abs. Antar led them on like a furious lion ; he uncovered his head, and received the horsemen of Aamir as the parched up land receives the first of the rain, with resistless and never-failing blows, as also the warriors of Khoolan, for

they were undaunted heroes, they penetrated through the ranks of the foe, and made them drink of the cups of death and perdition, scattering them over the plain and the waste.

But when the Absians heard Antar's shout, their souls revived, and they seemed to live again. Ay! my cousins, exclaimed Cais, now take retaliation on the foe, and cast off this dishonour, for this is our champion Antar that is arrived; now destroy your enemies over the plain and the mountain; and he who will not exert himself in the battle, may he never have a legitimate child! The Absians roused all their energy and spirit for the contest. But when Khalid saw Antar approach, he felt aware that he was able to annihilate his whole force, were they even double their numbers, and that he would disperse them over the desert and the sand-hills. So he called out to the Aamirites, and drew them off; they hesitated not, but dispersed themselves over the wilds and the wastes. Now I have nothing to do, said Khalid, but to go to the tents and kill all my Absian prisoners. When lo! they appeared before him, mounted on high-blooded steeds, with Shiboob hardly touching the earth with his feet. For Shiboob, on the arrival of his brother Antar, seeing how eager the enemy was in the contest, felt assured that there must be some Absian prisoners among them; so he set out for the tents of Aamir, where meeting Shedad and Oorwah, and the other prisoners, he hastened towards them, and released

them, and brought them horses, and weapons, and corslets, and armour, and they became warriors again. As soon as Khalid saw them thus rescued from imprisonment and danger, he had no other resource but to wheel round his horse, and fly to the land of the tribe of Fazarah. After him also fled the Brandisher of Spears; the standards and ensigns were upset, and the whole army was scattered over the plain and the waste, pursued by Antar and the tribes of Abs and Khoolan, till they expelled them out of the country, when they returned to their dispersed horses and scattered arms; and having collected their property and baggage, they set out for the tents, Antar at the head of them, like a noble lion. King Cais kissed him between the eyes, and congratulated him on his escape, and inquired what had happened. Antar related how Rebia and his brother Amarah had meditated his death, and every circumstance relative to his imprisonment and liberation.

On hearing this, King Cais execrated Rebia and his brother, and all the race of Zeead, saying, O Aboolfawaris, be not distressed, for by the faith of an Arab, I must punish the race of Zeead for their conduct; but some one says:

“ We acted kindly, and we were rewarded by
“ the reverse, and such is the conduct of worthless
“ traitors: those who act kindly to persons of a
“ different nature, are requited as one who assisted
“ a hyena was requited.”

O Aboolfawaris, added Cais, it is, however, incumbent on me to repay the tribe of Khoolan, by all the favours and benefits in our power, and that we consider them among our friends and allies. But we had better go first to the tribe of Fazarah, for I fear their chief must be reduced to extremities, and that we shall have some difficulty in delivering him. Do, O king, as you please, said Antar, for I will not oppose you ; but here let us repose. Having halted at the tents, the slaves brought them their dinner, and they treated the tribe of Khoolan with every distinction. They slept that night till dawn of day, when they set out for the land of the tribe of Fazarah, Antar marching ahead, and thus reciting :

“ I am going to assist Rebia and his tribe ; never
 “ can I sit quiet when the dust of war is roused ;
 “ were it not for thee, O Cais, I would not go to
 “ them ; but thou art my glory and my protector.
 “ Fazarah every day opposes me, but they are, in
 “ the contest, ever under alarms. All the kings of
 “ the earth fear my blows, and I have an impetuous
 “ action in the battle, no other knight possesses my
 “ ambition ! Its seat is above the Pisces, and, in the
 “ combat, my strength is like that of a trampling
 “ lion. Although my complexion is black, my deeds
 “ are the dawn of day, and fear of me is in the hearts
 “ of the most valiant ; for I thicken my spear-thrust
 “ in every region, and I cry out in the heat of the
 “ carnage, where is my opponent ? I am the bold

“ lion and hero, as they call on me in the day of the
“ crash of multitudes. The kings of the earth are
“ sensible of the terror of my power. In the slaughter
“ I encounter the vagabond warriors, and my sword,
“ when the dust mounts on high, cries to me, steep
“ me in wine, the blood of horsemen ; and when my
“ spear quivers on the deadly day, its barb is like a
“ kindling flash of fire. For love of thee, O daughter
“ of Malik, I am a lion hero. O thou ornament of
“ women in the assemblies ! O Ibla, wert thou to see
“ my deeds and exploits, when the black columns
“ rise up on the desert, like the darkness of night,
“ thou wouldst see me rush into it with a violence
“ and vehemence, no one, either naked or clothed,
“ can surpass.”

The warriors and chiefs, in astonishment at such eloquence, pursued their journey till, as they approached the tribe of Fazarah, they saw that the enemy had surrounded them on all sides ; their voices were enfeebled—they were fighting among the tents, and the power of utterance had almost expired. For Harith, son of Zalim, who was with them, as we before stated, seeing the party discomfited, said to himself, Why should I thus presumingly interfere, till I die slaughtered ? Accordingly, about evening, he took his men away, and seeking the pastures of the tribe of Fazarah, he carried off five thousand he and she camels ; and saying, This is the reward of my trouble, he set out for his own country. But, in his absence, the sword played among the tribe of

Fazarah, and Abdallah, Direed's brother, fell upon them unawares, with his troops. Khalid too, in his fears, repaired to them, and told them the loss he had sustained. Abdallah's alarms were awakened at hearing this account of Antar and the Absians, being certain they would not leave him quiet. Anxious, therefore, to avail himself of the opportunity, and pillage the property of Fazarah, and wishing to retire before the arrival of Antar, he called out to his warriors, and as he encouraged them to the contest, they exposed their lives to death and perdition; and making an assault on the tribe of Fazarah, like voracious lions, they devastated the country, and overwhelmed them with their triumphant superiority. Just as they were resolved on flight, all but Rebia, and the chieftains of Fazarah, and Zeead, and as the wretch Amarah was trembling in despair, with the women, arrived the tribes of Abs and Ghiftan, and the warriors of Khoolan, and Antar, the destroyer of horsemen. With one universal shout of, O by Abs! O by Adnan! they rushed down on the foe with hearts to which death was sweet and easy, and in less than an hour they drove them far from the tents, Antar exhibiting all his horrors, and performing deeds that would turn infants grey; and so astonished was the tribe of Khoolan, at Antar's exploits, that they wished him to return with them, that they might make him the champion of their lands and territory. Before mid-day, the army fled in disgrace, and Abdallah, giving

the reins to his horse, escaped. After this, the Arab horses were dispersed, and Khalid also fled, and sought the barren waste, alarmed at the chief Antar. The horsemen were scattered over the plains and sand-hills, and before evening, there not being one left, Antar conducted his people, and the tribe of Khoolan, back, and departed for the land of Abs and Adnan. But King Cais halted with the tribe of Fazarah, on account of Rebia, and congratulated him on his safety. Ah, O Cais, where, indeed, is our safety? said Hadifah; but that is of no consequence to thee, that does not interest thee. King Cais concealed these expressions in his heart; he remained that night with them, and departed the next day. But Antar, whilst he was marching with the tribe of Khoolan, meditated on the circumstances that had occurred to him among the tyrants of Arabia, and he thus recited:

“ Question my scimitar about my deeds on the
“ day of battle, and my blows amongst the kidneys
“ and the joints. Ask my whizzing spear, in the
“ sand-cloud, how many throats of noblest heroes
“ I have pierced. How many columns of dust I
“ have rushed through on my steed, crying out,
“ with a loud shout, Where is my antagonist? When-
“ ever Death sees me, he flies away in terror, fright-
“ ened at my Indian blade and spear. How many
“ warriors have I laid low with my sabre? whilst
“ the black blood rolled in waves from the breasts
“ of the combatants. I have routed, in the fiery

“ field, the sons of Aamir, on the backs of their
“ snorting chargers. They roam in flight, distracted
“ over the desert, horror-struck at my strength, and
“ the magnitude of my achievements. Learn, O
“ Ibla, how many warriors I have destroyed, how
“ many knights, on the day of carnage, I have
“ captured, and have then set at liberty, after lace-
“ rating their joints. How many heroes have sought
“ to slay me, but have not succeeded in their
“ attempts, and their every machination has been
“ frustrated. I have left Khalid, son of Moharib,
“ mangled, stretched out on the stones, and the
“ rocks; and as to his ill-starred tribe, I have made
“ them drink of death with the wine of absinth.
“ Also, in the valley of Torrents, I annihilated their
“ crowds, and made Wirdishan drink of the cups of
“ the grave. I seized all the wealth of Irak, and
“ Chosroe himself arose, bewildered and aghast.
“ Verily, I slew Badhramoot in my strength, against
“ whom the lions of armies could not prevail. I
“ carried off the Asafeer camels for thee, and the
“ diadem of Chosroe, unequalled in the world. I
“ am the Antar of horsemen—the knight of the tribe
“ —merciful and clement—black in complexion—
“ intrepid. I am the dauntless hero in every fight;
“ I am the knight of the fiery contest of illustrious
“ chieftains. Though, my cousin, my complexion
“ is black, yet my deeds are fair offsprings of muni-
“ ficence. I have that ambition, whose seat is above
“ Pisces, and my success and prosperity are the con-

“ summation of all good fortune. Mine is perfect
“ liberality and purest love, and my mansion is the
“ resort of every guest. All the kings of the earth
“ dread my power, and my renown is spread through-
“ out every tribe. My spear-thrust appears in death
“ and perdition, wherever life pervades the muscles
“ of man. Death is terrified at me, and even when
“ he wishes to escape me, I goad him on to speedier
“ flight with my iron fingers.”

The warriors and chiefs having thanked him, they continued their march till they reached home, when Antar alighted and conducted the tribe of Khoolan to the tents. The next day came King Cais, and the Absian chiefs. Antar rode out to meet them and saluted them; and, to his inquiries concerning the race of Zeead, By the faith of an Arab, my cousin, said Cais, had you yourself even fallen upon Rebia, and his brother, you would not have given them bitterer wounds. They now made feasts and entertainments for the tribe of Khoolan, and treated them with every honour and distinction. King Cais presented them with the most beautiful of his horses, the finest of his spears, and the most brilliant of his swords. Antar did the same as King Cais, and gave their chief a string of Asafeer camels, and presented him with five hundred of the she camels of the Volcano Mountain. Thus, the tribe of Khoolan, much gratified at the friendship of Antar, and the tribe of Abs and Adnan, sought their own country and lands. The Absians remained quiet at home; and the state

affairs of King Cais were well arranged under the terror of Antar, son of Shedad ; yet he always kept himself informed of Khalid's movements, that he might still have his revenge on him. But Khalid, when he fled, sought the land of Aamir, and though his party had preceded him, and had given the intelligence of their defeat, on his arrival the crisis appeared more disastrous. He assembled the chiefs that very day, and he debated about an expedition to the land of Irak, in order to complain of their situation to Prince Aswad, his near relation. They acquiesced in his wishes, and after they had secured their property and families on the mountain tops, they left the Brandisher of Spears to protect them, together with a small body of men, and departed for the land of Irak. Now Harith, when he quitted the land of Fazarah, immediately conducted his people to their own country, and then hastened with all expedition to the land of Irak, wishing to avert the calamities of the time, and to see how the business would terminate, for he had a sister in Hirah, married to a man called Sinan, son of Ebe Harithah ; she was usually employed in suckling King Numan's children, and at that time she was nursing one of his infants, called Shirjibee. Harith alighted at his sister Selma's, with the view of relating to King Numan what the tribe of Abs and Adnan had suffered from the brave Aamirites, as perhaps he would send some aid to the Absians, and appoint

him to command it. The next day, he presented himself to King Numan, and stated the case of the Absians, and what the tribe of Fazarah had also suffered from Abdallah, son of Samah. King Numan was much mortified, as was also Prince Aswad, on account of the tribe of Fazarah. Numan even wished to despatch that very day a messenger to the Arab hordes, and assemble an army to the assistance of the tribe of Abs and Adnan ; but, in the course of the day, arrived Khalid and some of the Aamirite chiefs, who repaired to Aswad with their turbans hanging loose round their neck, and howling in tears, and lamentations, and complaining of the disasters they had endured at the hands of the Absians. What ! said Aswad, O Khalid, Harith has just told us, that you had assembled an army against the Absians, and had left them, like many others, the prey of your sword, and my brother Numan has resolved on writing to the Arabs, and to send them to the tribe of Adnan, but now 'tis you yourself that complain of them. Harith was right in what he said, returned Khalid, but he knew not what happened to us afterwards. But we, O prince, were the first aggrieved by the Absians ; for King Zoheir falsely accused us of the blood of his son Shas, and outraged us—he slew our warriors ; but when I overcame him, and put him to death, I pardoned his wife and progeny. When Cais conquered us, we secured ourselves in the mountains,

but they killed twelve hundred of our heroes in one day, as Antar has described in his verses, where he says :

“ We slew of them two hundred and one thousand freeborn in the defiles and deserts.”

When we heard of Nacmah's death we threw ourselves upon Direed, and set out to engage them, and when we had reduced them to the last extremity, their slave Antar came up, and with him a party of Arab warriors : he defeated our armies, and dispersed us. We are therefore come hither that you may make peace between us and them, and for every price of blood we will give ten ; only let them set at liberty our women. On hearing Khalid's discourse, Aswad pitied him in his heart ; and engaging to accommodate matters, he went to his brother Numan, and related all the transactions between the Absians and Aamirites, and also Khalid's arrival, and that he was anxious to make peace with the Absians. As King Numan thought nothing was more desirable than harmony among the Arabs, he told his brother to introduce Khalid and his chiefs. Aswad introduced them, and King Numan arranged an impartial peace, neither prejudicial nor too advantageous. He also gave them a splendid entertainment ; and thus that day passed till evening, when they mutually communicated the various events and circumstances that had happened to them. Soon after, the horsemen having dispersed and quitted King Numan's assembly, Harith, whose

envy of Antar was greatly increased by what he had heard from Khalid, resolved to put Khalid to death, even under the sacred hospitality of Numan. Fixed in his determination, and only waiting till every one was asleep, he sprung up, and cautiously moved towards the tent where Khalid slept. He entered, and finding him asleep, he smote him with Zoolhy-yat, and severed his head from his body. He was departing, but it still occurred to his mind that perhaps his blow had not had its effect, and recollecting Warca's blow at Khalid on a former occasion, he returned and placed the edge of his sword against Khalid's chest, and leaned with all his weight upon it, till he plunged it deep through his body two spans into the earth *. Now being convinced he had finished him, he hastened away for his horse; he mounted, and quitted Hirah by night, distraction in his countenance; sometimes turning to the right, sometimes to the left, till the day dawned. At that time Akhwedh' arose to seek his brother, but he saw him dead. He shrieked in his horror: he ran to Aswad, and communicated the fate of his brother. Aswad ordered Harith's men to be seized, and they were instantly cast into chains and fetters. Thence he went to his brother Numan, and related

* It is an historical fact that Zoheir, son of Jazeemah, was slain by Khalid, who was murdered by Harith in the private tents of King Numan; and this was the cause of many wars. It is also stated that he in vain sought the protection of other tribes to screen him against Numan's vengeance.

what Harith had done. At this the light became dark in the eyes of Numan, and he swore he would put Harith to death.

As to Harith, after he had slain Khalid, he repented of the deed, and feeling assured he must die, he resolved to repair to the mountains and defend himself there till overtaken by death. But how can I be at ease? he said to himself; my cousins will be all murdered. He therefore set out on his return to Hirah, concealing himself among the mountains and the sand-hills till evening, when he reached Hirah, having first secreted his horse in some by-place. He then sought the spot where his companions were confined; perceiving their guards drowned in the sea of sleep, he grasped Zoolhyyat, and slaughtered them to the number of fifty. Hie to the tribe of Abs, he cried to his friends, and demand protection of King Cais, son of Zoheir, and of Antar, son of Shedad; but as for me, it is impossible for any one of the subjects of King Numan to protect me, for he is the king of the Arabs, but I am resolved on taking retaliation before I am slain: thus saying, he quitted them, and death became easy to him, till he entered his sister Selma's dwelling: and as soon as she saw him she saluted him. O my brother, said she, what has brought you back, safe as you were? I want thee, said Harith, to give me Numan's young son Shirjibeel, that I may meet his father with him to-morrow. I will request him to

forgive me this blood and this crime ; and as I was intoxicated when I murdered Khalid, perhaps he may pardon me on account of his child, and then I care not if the whole tribe of Aamir assemble against me.

His sister saw the propriety of this observation ; but she knew not the fraud and odious designs he harboured ; so she made over Numan's child to him in her fears for her brother. Harith carried him off, and hastened to the passage out of the city, where he remained near his horse till the city gates being opened, and the inhabitants coming forth, he cried out in a loud voice. The people stopped when they saw Harith, and hearing his shout, they stood staring at him as he tossed Numan's child up in the air, and as he fell he caught him on the point of his sword ; and the child fell, cut in two, on the spot ; and it was a lovely infant ! On beholding this, the people ran back to the city, and informed King Numan of the death of his child by the hand of Harith. On hearing the murder of his infant, a flame was kindled in his heart. He ordered his armies to march ; and there went forth about twelve hundred men in the pursuit of Harith. But he, as soon as he had slaughtered Shirjibeele, mounted his horse, and made towards the boundless desert ; and whilst he was travelling with all expedition, behold ! armies, like the rolling seas, appeared. He turned upon them as a lion would do, and shouted ; they were dismayed. He shouted again in the faces of

their horses ; he forced them back on their haunches, and they cast their riders off their backs. We have already mentioned Harith's superior prowess and intrepidity. He was one of the thousand tyrants : and he did not desist fighting from the forenoon even till the sun turned pale, by which time he had slain about seven hundred horsemen. But by the evening he was almost dead ; yet he did not so much grieve for himself as he grieved for his sword, and that the foe should possess it when he was no more ; so he went up to an immense rock that grew hard by, and heaving up his arm with Zoolhyyat, he extended his elbow, and smote the rock, wishing to shiver the weapon by the blow, that it might not fall into the enemy's possession, but it split the rock in two, and he continued his flight. When King Numan's troops came to the side of the rock and beheld Harith's blow, their senses were startled ; they stopped short, and not one of them dared to pursue him a span's length, saying to one another, By the faith of an Arab, no one will pursue him but he who bids adieu to life, and hails his death ! for when he saw no one before him to smite, he smote this rock ; but had this blow fallen on one of us, what would have become of him ? The twelve hundred being thus routed, returned to Hirah, and told Numan that Harith had escaped in safety. Numan instantly sent for Sinan. Thou vile old man, said he, thou perfidious dog ! No one but thou has murdered my son ; it was through thee I knew that

Harith, son of Zalim. No one shall ever rescue thee from hanging, unless he give security for thee as responsible for Harith. Sinan gave security for himself that he would produce Harith, were it possible, and if not, he would be his substitute in captivity and disgrace; and this the whole body of King Numan's satraps guaranteed. But what happened to Harith? When he had delivered himself from the army of King Numan, he turned his face towards the wastes and the wilds, and worked hard to make himself a resting-place on the mountain top, eating the herbs of the earth, and drinking of the rain-puddles. As to his companions, whom he had released from Numan's dungeons, and ordered to repair to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, they speeded away till they came to King Cais, and told him how Harith had murdered Khalid. At hearing this from the horsemen of Marah, King Cais was in a transport of delight, and he invested them with honorary robes. The Chief Antar also heard the news, and was overjoyed, though he wished Khalid's death had been the work of his own hand. By the faith of an Arab, said he, if Harith comes to me I will protect him from King Numan, from Chosroe Nushirvan, and from every one that dwells in the wilds and the deserts. King Cais too ordered splendid feasts and entertainments; but as he looked at Antar, he perceived that he eat and drank but little, and did not partake in the pleasures and amusements: so his brothers said to Cais, Outrage

not Antar's heart, but order his uncle Malik to marry Ibla to him, that our joy may be complete. King Cais accordingly sent for Malik, and taking him aside, said, Why do you not wed Ibla to her cousin Antar? is she not his affianced wife? and have you not taken her marriage portion? Yes, O king, said Malik; Ibla, and her mother, and her father, and her brother, are his slaves at his service; and if you wish it, to-night before to-morrow's dawn I will marry her to him. In three days I desire, said King Cais, that our joys may be complete and our enemies be vexed. Malik acquiesced, and stood up to go away after having kissed his hand; and when they separated, Malik went home, and being alone with his wife, he sent Ibla to her uncle's, and as he wept before her mother, What's the matter? said she to him. One has used me ill, said he, out of whose influence I cannot withdraw myself; for his heart is now relieved from the affliction of his enemies, and Antar is even in greater favour with him than with his father. He has obliged me to marry Ibla to him; but by the faith of an Arab, were the head of this vile slave to mount to heaven itself, my heart could never submit to yield him my daughter. Now Ibla's mother felt convinced that her daughter could be matched to no one but Antar, because he had ever protected her. As to Antar, he returned home quite rejoiced at the order for his marriage, and he wanted to mount his horse, and go to his uncle's, when lo! his brother Shiboob came

up to him, distressed and melancholy. What's the news? said Antar; what has happened? Know, son of my mother, said Shiboob, that your sister Merwah is come from the dwellings of the tribe of Ghiftan, and she is in a violent passion, and probably angry with her husband; but she wishes to see you. Antar immediately went to see what was the matter. This Merwah was the daughter of Shedad, and married in the tribe of Ghiftan to a man called Jahjah; and she had a son, whose name was Hatal, who used to mount the horses, practise horsemanship, and was habituated to nocturnal expeditions. His uncle Antar was very fond of him; but when he heard of the arrival of his sister, he hastened to her: she sprung up towards him, and kissing his hand, O my brother, said she, my son Hatal! the heroes of Ghiftan have bewildered his mind: they ordered him to join them, and took him away with them to gain some cattle and plunder. But some nights ago I saw a dream, and there were my son and his companions in a forest all entangled with trees, and over their legs chains and fetters of fire; and at the mouth of the forest there was a ferocious lion that threatened to devour them night and day. I awoke; but I was terribly frightened. I rushed out of the tents, and lo! I beheld a black slave at the door in the garb of a beggar. I went in again, and I brought him out some bean husks, which I gave him, saying, Take these, O stranger! and pray for the return of my absent son. Is not thy

son Hatal? said he. Yes, I replied; and I perceive you know him. Know then, said he, your son has fallen a prisoner into the power of Locait, son of Zararah, and with him twelve warriors of his tribe, and I am come as a messenger from him to you, and he begs you will hasten to his uncle Antar. And now, my brother, I am come to you, and my object is to obtain my son's deliverance through you. Antar was confounded at this interruption of his happiness. Return home, my sister, said he, and calm your mind, for I will go and release your son. I will soon come to you with him and all his property. Thus having appeased her mind, and relieved her of her sorrows, he sent for Oorwah, and told him what had happened; he ordered him and his noble comrades to march, and recommended his father Shedad to keep the affair secret, that King Cais's heart might not be harassed. He took away his brothers Shiboob and Jareer, and his father Shedad, and the Carad horsemen, and his uncle Zakhmetuljewad.

As to Ibla's father, he was rejoiced when he heard this, for he had resolved either to inform Rebia, or to escape by flight into the desert. So the business turned out just as he wished, and his situation was improved after all his discomposure; but when he saw Antar mounted, he said in his perfidy and iniquity, O my nephew, truly Hatal's mother has spoiled all our pleasures by this untoward interruption. Uncle, said Antar, there is a prescribed time

for every thing, and all that is predestined must take place. And he quitted him; and finding his people waiting anxiously for him, he departed with one hundred of Oorwah's men, and two hundred of the race of Carad, whilst Shiboob started ahead of the horse on the road to the land of the tribe of Darem.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Now Locait, son of Zararah, was an uncontrollable knight; he was the bold one of the age and period, and the Arabs called him the Eagle of War, and the Knight of Woe. Locait had nineteen brothers by the same father and mother, and he was the eldest; and their father was conspicuous among men for his birth and parentage.

One day, their father being seated in his tent, his sons came to him, and complained of their brother Locait's excessive pride and haughtiness, and stated their resolution to emigrate. He sent for Locait, who in fact was a great coxcomb in his gait, and most ostentatious in his general deportment. My son, said he (for he was exceedingly angry and indignant at such conduct), you are indeed a most self-sufficient fellow, and behave in a most overbearing manner towards your brothers and your comrades. Had you even in your pastures a thousand of the Asafeer camels, or were you possessed of Bedret-ul-Yemen, the daughter of Moazzem, the lord of the Pavilion and the Palace, or could you even overcome in battle the Chief Antar, the Knight of Hidjaz, you would not even then strut about as at present, neither would you swagger your limbs in

this bragging, blustering style. What! father, said Locait, then these are the three accomplishments which should a man attain, he would acquire the highest glory among the brave and the heroic? What can be superior to these three acquisitions? added his father. At the instant, up started Locait and went to his uncle, and asked his assistance. This uncle was also a brave and valiant hero, and he promised to aid him.

They mounted their steeds, and taking with them two she camels to carry water and provisions, and two sturdy slaves, they quitted their tents under the cover of the night; and when they were at some distance, after consulting which they should attempt first, they were unanimous in the opinion, that they should first of all proceed to the King Moazzem.

Now this king was a mighty monarch, and a stout horseman. He was the lord of armies, and troops, and lands, and cities; his country lay on the borders of the cities of Nihas, and it was called the land of As, where he possessed a strong impregnable fortress, in which was an idol named Jebbar, which this king and his people worshipped. He had also a daughter called Bedret-ul-Yemen, of whom he was very fond; and out of his great affection, he consigned her over to the idol, and rejected every suitor and every wooer.

Locait and his uncle travelled on till they reached the country of King Moazzem, where they beheld populous cities, abundant cultivation, and tents and

dwelling, and spears and swords, at which sight Locait was much disordered ; he turned towards the fountains and the waters, and having bathed, and clothed himself in magnificent robes, he with his uncle proceeded to King Moazzem. Near his palace they met the officers and satraps, to whom Locait addressed himself : My wish, said he, is to visit your King. The satraps entered : the King deliberated, but at last exclaimed, Go out, and ask him his name ; for if it be Locait, son of Zararah, invite him in ; if any one else, turn him away : for thus has the idol ordered. Moreover, I saw a dream, in which I was standing in front of the idol, and I demanded of it a husband for my daughter. In these days, it replied, there will be sent for thy daughter a valiant husband, and a brave hero, called Locait, son of Zararah. Marry him to thy daughter, and let him share in thy favours (but this dream was the result of his fears about his daughter).

So the attendants went out, and asked Locait his name. He said, Locait ! The King Moazzem admits thee, said they : and he entered in the presence of the King, who directed him to be seated ; and having also imparted to him the dream he had seen, he prepared feasts for three days, after which he pitched the marriage canopy, and introduced Locait to his daughter, without marriage, any dower, or donations. Locait went to her, and saw she was a full moon no description can attain ; but he was ashamed to approach her without a wedding present,

lest he should become a scandal in every land. So he turned his back towards her, and slept till the damsel also fell asleep; when he started up, and awoke his uncle. Arise, my uncle, said he, let us repair to King Numan to procure a marriage dower: and they sallied forth by night.

They rapidly continued their journey till they reached the city of Numan, and by great good fortune they met Harith, roaming like one distracted among the deserts, for they had heard of his adventures.

Locait no sooner saw Harith, than he pounced down upon him like an eagle, crying out, Eh! son of Zalim, whither wouldst thou seek refuge from the great King and the lion warrior? Harith, on hearing this address, and seeing him alone, felt his courage rise against him, and shouted out, Hola! O Arab, What man art thou? tell me quick. Surrender, said Locait, ere thou diest!

Upon that, Harith poised his spear, and let out his horse on its speed, and charged at him. Each rushed upon his antagonist, and commenced the combat, that lasted till the day was darkened, when Harith being exhausted by the contest, Be generous, thou Arab, he cried, and outrage not a man, whom the sufferings of this widely-extended desert have debilitated. Take me prisoner, and perhaps it may be productive of good. And he threw away his spear, and stood still. Locait thinking he had surrendered himself, Dismount, said he, that I may

pinion thee. Promise me, said Harith, that thou wilt not concert with King Numan for my blood.

And he continued his insidious importunities (his intention being only to protract the contest a little), till he drew forth his sabre Zoolhyyat, like a flash of lightning, and fell upon Locait, like the descent of an overwhelming calamity, and smote him. He cleft his casque, and the chains, and wounded him; and had not Harith been previously exhausted, he would have slain him.

Locait repented of what he had done; the world seemed darkened in his eyes, and the blood streamed down his face: but when Locait's uncle saw him in this condition, he rushed upon Harith, and occupied him in the contest till Locait had recovered, and regained his senses; and his return was like the return of a lion. He shouted at Harith, and drove at him with the heel of his spear, and hurled him on the ground: his uncle dismounted and pinioned him.

Early next day, Locait resumed his journey till he reached the land of Irak. In the excess of Locait's good fortune, he arrived during Numan's days of festivity*, when he clothed every one in splendid

* It had happened that Numan, in a fit of intoxication, had ordered two of his companions to be killed. When he recovered, he was so struck with remorse, that he raised a tomb to their memory, and set aside two days in every year, one of which he called his day of sorrow; the other, his day of joy. On the first, whomsoever he met, he slew on the tomb; on the other, whoever came to him he would load with gifts, and grant every request.

robes; and as soon as the slaves beheld him, they crowded towards him from every direction, and continued to load him with robes of honour till his horse could move no further.

King Numan being informed of the circumstance immediately mounted, his heart bounding with joy, as he exclaimed, This is indeed a joyous day, and a real triumph over foes and enemies. He received Harith from him, and cast him into a subterraneous cave, and there left him. But Locait presented himself to Numan, who complimented him, and asked his rank, and parentage, and his tribe, and his Arab connexion. My lord, said he, I am of the tribe of Darém, lords of honours, and distinctions, and spears, and swords; and I am Locait, son of Zararah. Be so obliging, said Numan, as to demand what you want, and be sure of attaining it in these days of joy. Upon this Locait took courage, and informed Numan of his marriage, and the cause of his expedition; and I ask of you a marriage dower for my wife Bedret-ul-Yemen. By the protection of an Arab, said Numan, had you demanded my kingdom, I would have made it over to you. And he ordered him a thousand Asafeer she camels, to which he added an infinity of other things, as he said to his attendants, Do ye also give this youth all the cattle and flocks that you drove to the pastures this day. After this, he ordered them to pitch tents for him without the city, and convey him wine and meat.

Three days Locait passed very merrily, but on the fourth he departed, habited like a powerful monarch, with horses, and mules, he and she camels, and slaves, and cattle; and with his uncle he continued his journey over the deserts; and the world was too compressed for the excess of his joy and exultation. As to the father of his bride, his misfortune was severe; for his countrymen irritated his heart with reproaches; yet he expressed outwardly his resignation, and concealed his affliction and vexation till Locait's return with the cattle and the camels. The whole country was in confusion with delight: the King himself went out to meet him, with the grandees of the tribe, and saluting him, inquired whither he had been? O my lord, answered Locait, you acted towards me on my arrival here as no one ever acted before, and heaped upon me obligations beyond my powers to bear; you even married me to your daughter Bedret-ul-Yemen; but I could not submit to the idea of possessing the daughter of a king without a marriage-donation, and I be called too the Knight of the Universe: so I went away to seek some gain, and the God of old has bestowed on me these favours.

Thus saying, he gave orders to his slaves, and they led away the noble steeds, decorated with housings of gold, and the Asafeer camels, which are the wonders of wonders, and exhibited all he had of garments, and cattle, and high-priced jewels. The King was astonished at the extraordinary things he

beheld, and he gloried in such an illustrious husband for his daughter. He made splendid feasts, and sent for musicians, and made his daughter a second marriage-banquet. He married her to Locait, and all his griefs and troubles were at an end. Thus they caroused and feasted till the day dawned.

After a stay of seven days, Locait prepared for his departure. The King granted his permission, and made him immense presents in cattle. Bedret-ul-Yemen having taken leave of her father and mother, they raised her on the back of the camel; but the King accompanied her one whole day, as a last farewell of her. On the second day Locait requested him to return; and he continued his course, having succeeded in all he had coveted, and as he travelled on, passing over the wilds and the wastes, he thus recited:

“ I have succeeded in my object and demands of
“ fortune, for I have possessed myself of Bedret-ul-
“ Yemen by my sword. She is indeed the full moon
“ when it rises over her tent; the rosy-coloured
“ moon, that lights up the desert for my distracted
“ love. It is as if the sword of her father flashed
“ from her eyes, that vanquish hearts without laws,
“ human or divine. Her beauty is so perfect, the
“ sun might envy it, when it rises in all its splen-
“ dour over the dwellings and the lands. It is, as
“ if beauty’s self fraternised and associated with her,
“ as the soul of life associates with the body. Were
“ she to call a ghost from the tomb it would an-

“swer, and from its shroud would say, Here am I.
 “I have possessed myself of her by my sword, having
 “broken the hearts of all her suitors by my ven-
 “turous trials. To-morrow will the spectators be
 “amazed at my ambition, when I draw along the
 “train of my glory in my native land. When I
 “draw my sword in the battle, I make knights bow
 “to it from Senaa to Aden.”

When Locait had finished, he continued over the deserts, when lo ! Antar's nephew, Hatal, and his companions, drew nigh. Seeing Locait, and the cattle he had with him, his avidity was excited, and he ordered his men and warriors to desire him to abandon his property. But Locait, in the pride of his character, paid no attention, but rushed upon him with all his impetuosity ; and they fiercely engaged, till eight warriors being slain, and twelve more being prisoners, he assailed Hatal, and exhibited against him all his wonderful powers and terrors ; but they were not long engaged, before he took him captive, and united him to his comrades. Being much surprised at his prowess, Of what tribe art thou, said he, for I never yet beheld thy equal ? O Chief, replied Hatal, I am called Hatal, and my maternal uncle is Antar, son of Shedad, the knight of battle and war : it was he who instructed me in this horsemanship and dexterity in the spear-thrust and sword-blow. O my uncle, said Locait, turning towards him, there never was so fortunate an expedition as this ; for thou knowest the cause of my departure

from home was the scandal of my father, who, when my brothers complained of me, said to me, Were even a thousand Asafeer camels in thy pastures, and wert thou to marry Bedret-ul-Yemen, the daughter of the lord of the palace and great pavilion, and wert thou to overcome in battle Antar, the Knight of Hijaz, thy deportment would not be such as this, nor wouldest thou swagger thy limbs in all this presumption. I am now arrived at two of these distinctions, and I am now reaching the third, as I have taken this lion-youth prisoner; for he is the son of Antar's sister, and his uncle will unquestionably come to release him as soon as he hears what has happened to him; and then will I fight him in the presence of my father.

After this he set out, traversing the mountains and valleys in ecstasies of delight, till he reached his native land. The good tidings had preceded them; his father had been very anxious on his account, till being informed of his son's approach, he went out to meet him with his brothers, and the aged Sheiks of the tribe. As soon as he saw him and the quantity of cattle he had with him, he was overjoyed, and inquired what had happened. Locait related his adventures; he established himself in the dwellings, and the horsemen of the horde stood in awe of him. He made entertainments for them all, and in the excess of his self-admiration, and his anxiety to meet Antar, he despatched a slave to Hatal's mother, as if from her son.

But now let us return to our former narrative. Antar and his father Shedad continued their journey with two hundred horsemen of the family of Carad and Oorwah, and his men, seeking the land of the tribe of Darem ; and as they hastened over the sand-hills, Antar was very melancholy at this interruption of his joys, and thus he spoke :

“ My transports are silent ; but my grief, how
 “ can I conceal it ? In my heart is the flame of
 “ love, that consumes it. How can I disguise my
 “ situation ? it is evident. How can I deny it ?
 “ My tears disclose it. I say, my heart is at rest
 “ about my love of thee ; but it is a prey to anxiety,
 “ and it cannot change. Oft, as I say, my fortune
 “ is bright and pure, the nights of absence return
 “ to renew its sorrows. O Ibla, how can I endure
 “ with patience my distraction ? My fate resists
 “ me with every open outrage. I am seeking Hatal,
 “ to rescue him from captivity, and I will disgrace
 “ whoever puts him in fear. I will make Loçait
 “ see the exploits of the lion Antar : he shall shrink
 “ from me, and I will expose him to peril.”

They travelled on till they came nigh unto the land of the tribe of Darem, where they repaired to a lake, and halted to consult on what they should do. My opinion, said Shiboob, is that you ride on for the rest of this day, till you know that you have passed beyond the abodes of the tribe ; and when you are in their rear, conceal yourselves whilst I depart for the tents, and on my return I will explain

to you how to surprise them, and seize their property, and rescue Hatal and his companions; thus you may succeed in all your wishes, and we return home. You are perfectly right, Shiboob, said Antar.

Shiboob accompanied them till he was certain that he had conducted them beyond the dwellings of Darem. Now, pursue your way, said he, to the valley of Ramla, which is ahead of ye; there conceal yourselves, and move not till I return. He took with him his brother Jareer, and clothed himself in a jacket of coarse cloth, with wide sleeves, and put on an immense turban, that closed over his face.

Thus they went on till they reached the tents, when the slaves sprung towards them in all directions, inquiring who they were. We are messengers from the tribe of Aamir, said Shiboob to Locait, son of Zararah; where shall we find him? Repair to that great pavilion, said the slaves. Upon that Shiboob advanced, and Jareer followed him; and they found Locait seated at the door of his tent, and his brothers round him, and all his cattle scattered about. Shiboob penetrated through the crowd, but before Locait could question him, May God grant long life to the noble Chief, he exclaimed; the honoured Prince, the Lord of great emprise, the Chief Locait, Chieftain of the tribe of Darem. Hail to thee, too, said Locait (to whom this discourse was very gratifying, and who was greatly surprised at the fluency of his speech), O Arab born, speak thy purpose, make known thy demands. What manner of

man art thou? I am, my lord, of the tribe of Aamir, your friends and allies, said Shiboob; and I am come to you with intelligence that is exactly to your wish. My master Ahkwedh, son of Giafer, has sent me to you out of his great regard for you, saying to me, Go to my brother Locait, and tell him that Antar is proceeding with a party of warriors in order to rescue his nephew Hatal, and his companions; and I am alarmed on account of his violence; but if there should be any good opportunity, make him drink of horrors to suffocation, and should he know any thing of Harith, who slew my brother Khalid, in the sacred hospitality of King Numan, let him secure him for me; and if Hatal is still with him, let him despatch him hither, and I will send in his stead as much cattle as he desires.

By the faith of an Arab, said Locait, in admiration at the sweetness of his language, this slave is an eloquent fellow. May God bless the tribe that makes its slaves resemble princes and chiefs: as to Harith, said he to Shiboob, I took him prisoner, and I presented him to King Numan, and I have received in his stead camels and horses. As to Hatal, he is with me in bondage and confinement, and when his uncle Antar comes to release him, I will accelerate his death, and thus will I accomplish the three distinctions, on account of which my father shamed me; and I will not leave one of the Absians to tell the tale. Moreover, I am determined to depart to-morrow morning to meet this black slave.

O my lord, continued Shiboob, expressing his thanks, if you would but be so obliging as to make over to me those foul wretches, I should be so glad to have the chastisement of them whilst they are in confinement, till you return from this expedition, bringing with you the tribe of Abs and Adnan in chains and captivity, and at their head their slave Antar: then will I return to my master Ahkwedh, son of Giafer, and tell him all about it. Youth, said Locait to Shiboob, did your spies say with how many horsemen Antar was coming against us? Yes, my lord, said Shiboob, he is coming against you with a thousand horsemen of Ghitfan, and the tribes of Abs and Adnan. Locait laughed and smiled at this; May God disgrace the mustachios of that bastard slave, cried he. And he ordered his slaves (according to the decrees of fate) to deliver Hatal and his companions over to Shiboob.

As soon as the sun had risen over the mountains, he took away with him three thousand of his choice warriors, leaving five hundred horsemen to protect the cattle and families. He departed, roaring in his rage against Antar; and he knew not that he whom he sought was concealed in his rear. No sooner were the dwellings deprived of their protectors, than Shiboob sent his brother Jareer to inform Antar of all we have mentioned.

Jareer traversed the deserts in quest of his brother, and told him of Shiboob's contrivances, and that Locait had set out with his warriors and horsemen.

Greatly delighted, Antar ordered his comrades to equip themselves with their arms, and to prepare for the contest. He instantly departed, and by morning reached the lands of the tribe of Darem, where he saw the cattle grazing, which his men attacked, and drove away all they could of he and she camels, whilst the slaves ran home exclaiming, Woe and death ! The horsemen mounted, and the troops hastened from every direction, intending to redeem the plunder, all clad in armour and corslets, well accoutred, and determined to resist. But Antar having already sent the cattle away with fifty lion horsemen, stopped with the remainder ; and when the enemy came up, heroes shouted out at heroes, and they stretched out their spears, and commenced a furious battle, driving with their lances, that wrenched out lives. They smote each other with scimitars till blood gushed forth, and streamed, and filled the whole desert.

Antar overpowered them with his impetuosity and intrepidity, forcing them back till the fight was continued close to the tents, and the women were nearly reduced to slavery and infamy. Screams arose ; the slaves rushed out ; maidens sought their protectors and defenders ; and existence seemed annihilated. Shiboob had made himself known to Hatal and the rest, and told him the real state of the case, and the plans he had adopted ; at which they were much delighted, rejoicing at the prospect of release from captivity and ignominy.

Now Shiboob seeing the tents vacated by the horsemen, and every one employed in the contest, released his friends from their fetters, and brought them horses, and a sufficient supply of arms, saying to them, Now, away to your cousins, and aid them. Accordingly, Hatal rushed on, followed by the others. They shouted, they assaulted, they belowed, they fought, till the people of the dwellings resolved on flight, having resisted till evening; but Antar goaded them so fiercely, that they were all huddled together with the women. Upon that he retired, and night coming on with darkness, My cousins, said he, our companions are released from captivity; and it would ill become us to enslave women in the absence of the warriors. It will be better for us to return hence, and renounce all outrage and violence. And I, said Shiboob, will conduct you over the extent of the desert, and by cutting across the mountains and the plains, by morning I will bring you out in a distant land. Do, O Shiboob, as you please, said Antar; perhaps we may soon reach our own country.

Shiboob set off with them early in the night, whilst he himself kept in their rear till sun-rise, when he conducted them down to the waters of Caiwan; here they halted, and rested their horses.

Shiboob still directed them across the deserts and wastes by unfrequented paths, till he approached the land of the tribe of Aamir, where he made them travel along by-roads, and halt till night, when he

desired them to drive on the camels and horses, and pursue their way in haste, and before morning he had left the enemy behind him, but he said not a word about it to his brother. Well, Shiboob, said Antar, what are the dangers we have left behind? Son of my mother, replied Shiboob, you know well, that between you and the tribe of Aamir there is an enmity of long standing, and particularly that Brandisher of Spears, and Ahkwedh, son of Giafer. At hearing this Antar was much disordered. Thou son of a dog, said he, and so thou art afraid of a numerous body of men! By the faith of an Arab, had I known what thou wert about, I would not have left the tribe of Aamir in peace and quietness. They halted, till the day was spent, and then departed, seeking their native land: now Shiboob cast round his eyes, and behold a dust arose, and closed up every vent in the country. It will be as well to prepare for battle, said he to Antar, and not move hence till we exactly know what all this means.

Having stationed the he and she camels in their rear, they advanced towards the dust, and waved their spears. Soon the cloud cleared away from an army like the drifting sand, and horsemen like fragments of a mountain. All were in coats of mail, and breastplates of great weight, and with them were camels, and horses, and cattle, and women, and children, and the shrieks of woe convulsed the mountains. Now then it is all evident,—The truth is apparent, cried Shiboob to Antar, our property and

our families, my brother, have been a prey to calamities; our abodes and our lands have been pillaged; and if my apprehensions are right, this army is of the tribes of Aamir, of Ghani, and Kelab. They have vanquished our country, and have rooted out every vestige of us. Thou art right, brother, said Antar, and now I hear the voice of Ibla, and the women of the Carad family. On this day shall be made known the virtue of the brave. This calculation was correct, and the cause of it was Ahkwedh, son of Giafer, in whose heart was a sparkling flame against the tribe of Abs. In his fury against them, and his alarms of their invasion, he stationed spies and scouts over them to bring him news. Thus matters continued, till he was informed that Antar was gone to the tribe of Darem, and with him some of the noblest warriors. He also learnt that Rebia and his brothers were still with the tribe of Fazarah. Well, said he to the Brandisher of Spears, what say you, O Gheshm, to an expedition against our foes, thus insuring retaliation during the absence of their slave? Very right, said Gheshm, and accordingly they assembled the Aamirite horsemen, and those of Ghani and Kelab, and there came six thousand well equipped, all brave fellows. Leaving one thousand to protect the dwellings and the country, he marched till he reached the land of the tribe of Abs; where, dividing his army into three corps, he surprised the Absians under the veil of the night, when, most of the people being asleep, he put them to the sword,

and before the morning rose in smiles, he had possessed himself of the tents and dwellings. King Cais had fled with his brothers, and those who were able to escape. The horsemen were scattered about, and sought the land of the tribe of Ghitfan; some betook themselves to Fazarah, and the tribe of Abs was completely disorganized, and ruined. In the morning the Aamirites returned home, after having taken prisoners the women, and plundered their property. They travelled in haste, triumphing in the success of their wishes, for the greatest part of the Absians had been driven away in despair; many of their horsemen were wounded, and no people were ever reduced to such a miserable state. The Brandisher of Spears being under some alarm, lest King Cais might turn upon them, and bring troops and armies against him, hastened their march, till they met Antar and the Absian horsemen. Now the whole tribe appeared through the dust, and Antar heard the screams of the women, and the lamentations of Ibla. He rushed towards the quarter of the women, and pounced down upon them like an eagle. His noble horsemen followed him, for he was chiefly anxious to release the prisoners from torments. When the tribe of Aamir recognised him, they shouted, and the Brandisher of Spears exclaimed, How lucky is this rencounter, than which none more beautiful was ever traced on the leaves of history! Attack this slave-dæmon, my cousins, he continued, that we may erase out for ever every

vestige of the tribe of Abs. Come on ! come on ! Antar made at him with his whole might ; then rushed on the whole army. Antar met them with the horsemen of his tribe, for they were horsemen that would mount even lions ; they received the spears on their chests, harder than stones and rocks. Antar was at their head, with spear-thrusts that made their very skins shrivel with horror, and in an hour, their ensigns and standards were upset, and his horsemen were like one man on that celebrated day. Spears were extended ; the stern-faced heroes assailed, and the most tenacious of existence were prodigal of their lives ; whilst they all tasted of sorrow and wounds. Antar roared at their head and shouted ; horsemen drank cups from death ; the women instantly heard his shouts, and they exclaimed, Oh glorious morning ! Antar, the grasper of lives, is come ! and they prayed for his victory and triumph to the Source of the Clouds and the Conqueror of the Winds, who opens for his servants the gates of life without a key. Praise be to him ! may he grant sinners repentance and grace ! They continued in this dreadful state, till the brilliancy of the day being converted into the darkness of night, the two armies separated from the blow and the thrust, after they had been engaged in a contest that would have turned youth to age. There were laid low of the tribes of Aamir, and Ghani, and Kelab, about seven hundred horsemen, over the face of the land, and five-and-twenty of the Absians

were slain, and as many wounded. Yet they retired from the combat, like wild beasts when they start from their dens, and behind them was the lion Antar, and his nephew Hatal. And having alighted, they began to consult and deliberate how they should engage that numerous host. As for me, said Antar, were the battle to last a whole year, and around me were to assemble all the tribes and hordes of the desert, I will not stir hence, till I release the women from the hands of the foe, and I disperse them over the wastes, and the wilds. As for me, by the faith of an Arab, I will not leave of all these five thousand, no not an old or a young one; as for me, I will offer myself alone as their antagonist, and I will make them taste deep of misery. After all their exultations, their warriors and their chieftains will I slay. Thus he remained, watching over them in the obscurity of the night.

As to the tribe of Aamir, when they quitted the combat and halted at their post, bewildered at the tribe of Abs, and at their assault, they complained of their situation to Ahkwedh. If this dæmon continues to assail us, he will not leave one of us alive, particularly since he knows Ibla is with us. O my cousins, said Ahkwedh, if we do not make a general attack upon them to-morrow, the Brandisher of Spears being with us, we can never hope to succeed. Speak not, O chief, said the elders, in this manner: we never can succeed against Antar, we cannot overcome him, whilst he has behind him men like wild

beasts, all of whom protect his rear. Were I not afraid, said the Brandisher of Spears, of Shedad, and Oorwah, and Hatal, I would go out against him tomorrow, and would engage him, and take off his attention from you, till his companions might be all destroyed. But I also fear King Cais may overtake us with the Arabs of Hijaz, and powerful armies, which we shall be unable to resist; we shall be obliged to fly, and abandon all this booty. My cousins, if the business is indeed, as it is represented, said Ahkwedh, I will send away the prisoners with one hundred valiant horsemen, and when morning dawns, we will by some means contrive the destruction of Antar; and if there comes an irresistible force against us, and we resolve on flight, we shall, at any rate, have the advantage of the property and booty. This will do, said the Brandisher of Spears; for Antar, if he knows this, will go after them, and then we will attack his companions and destroy them: but should he stop, after he receives this news, his heart will be so pre-occupied with Ibla, that his resolution will fail, and he will be in despair. We will make a sudden attack, and complete our wishes, for he never could engage this tempestuous ocean but when Ibla is present. After this harangue, they despatched the captives with one hundred horsemen, and sent with them the guide, Kimhar, who led them away under the veil of obscurity; and when daylight shone, the first that started forth to the fight was Antar, and he knew nothing of what

had happened. The armies of the tribe of Aamir arose, like the ocean when it roars. Ahkwedh shouted out towards them, and assured them of the entire ruin of the Absians, for they consisted of four thousand well known horsemen, and the Absians only amounted to one hundred and fifty ; but their hearts ever anticipated victory and conquest, relying on the intrepidity of Antar. With such resolutions they engaged ; they pierced each other with Redeinian spears, and they smote each other with their edged scimitars. Calamities and evils were magnified, and men felt anguish as they expired. But God aided Antar and his deeds, that day. How many warriors laid he low ! How many heroes and brave men did he reduce to despair ! They continued in this state till mid-day, when Antar seeing the Brandisher of Spears plying his cleaving sword among his comrades, instantly fell upon him, like the descent of a ravenous eagle—he closed with him ; and as he exhibited all his wonderful prowess and courage, he shouted at him in a voice that terrified him ; he manœuvred with him for an hour, till having exhausted him, he thrust out his hand towards the rings of his corslet, and was about to throw him on the ground, when lo ! a dust arose, and a black cloud of sand mounted on high, and beneath was seen the glitter of armour, and the gleam of spears, and men fearless of death, and undaunted, exclaiming, O by Darem ! and at their head was Locait, son of Zararah, like a frantic eagle,

and round him were his brothers, like devouring vultures ; and when they came nigh to the field of battle, and saw the engines of war revolving, they rushed upon the Absians, like greedy lions, for they had heard the shouts and cries, and had distinguished friends from foes. When Antar marked this occurrence, and saw all the troops directing their lances towards him, he let go the Brandisher of Spears, and turned to defend himself. The horse-men encompassed him on all sides, whirling their sharp sabres about his body, and he felt assured of death. But the Absians fought like men in despair ; the thin blades laboured among them ; death and annihilation were let loose upon them ; and had not the God of heaven assisted them, not one of them had survived to taste of water.

They continued in this dreadful contest till the darkness separated them, after the Absians had lost twenty valiant fellows. Shedad and Oorwah, and a number of the Carad family, were wounded : they were surrounded by the foe on every side, and every way of access and egress was cut off. Locait having rescued his property, and rejoicing in the accomplishment of his object, hastened to Ahkwedh. The Aamirite Chiefs thanked him for what he had done, and, to their inquiries about the cause of his arrival, he told them what had passed. When Antar heard of the departure of Ibla and the women for the land of the Aamirites, he laid down ; he was sorely afflicted for his companions and the

captivity of their women: grief and melancholy, such as no heart of man or fiend ever felt, fell upon his soul, and his gall was bursting. Turning towards the noble Absians that survived; Although I feel, said he, as if my life could not last beyond this night; yet to-morrow morning I will challenge these armies that surround us on all sides—I will shame them with their numbers—I will call them forth by hundreds and more. If they do this, I shall succeed in my project, were they even as numerous as the sands of the desert: if they assault, I will destroy these armies in your presence, and I will rescue you with spears and cleaving scimitars; I will protect you with my vehemence and perseverance till you reach the land of Shureba and Mount Saadi; then will I return alone against them, and I will overwhelm them with my strength and my power, or my skin shall be flayed off with the barbs of their spears. O my son, said Shedad, there is not one of us that will abandon thee whilst thou art alive, were our lives to be reduced to collar-bones and shoulder-blades. Thus also said his nephew Hatal, and all the rest. The two armies reposed, some feeling secure, and some apprehensive, till, day dawning, the fierce Absians arose for the contest, and their souls bade adieu to their carcasses. The universe was convulsed with shouts; the foe resolved to attack them with swords and spears, when lo! Antar started forth into the field, and rushed forward, determined in his mind to do some-

thing that might be recorded of him, and perhaps remove his grief and distress; then he thus recited:

“ We are a tribe that fear not annihilation; we
 “ regard not the results of calamities. How should
 “ we? Death draws up his skirts, and we en-
 “ counter him with our noble spirits. There is not
 “ one of us that fears death; for death is pre-
 “ destined to every one alive. Come forth, then!
 “ behold the lion of the den, resolved on chasing
 “ the wild beasts in the midst of the deserts.
 “ He dreads not the warriors in the field of battle;
 “ he fears not the most numerous hosts; he comes,
 “ and this day ye shall feel his powerful thrusts,
 “ and his blows that cleave skulls. If I live, I
 “ will succeed; if I die, I shall fall, slain by the
 “ separation from my beloved. The peace of God
 “ be with thee, daughter of Malik; and now this
 “ day will I ply my sword-blows among them.”

Antar had not finished, when, from the quarter of the tribe of Aamir, there arose a dust that darkened the day; and lo! there arose another dust, and it appeared from the quarter of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and it was more extensive than the former, and the shouts more tumultuous and more terrific; and the horsemen, who were beneath it, were eagerly pursuing their march, headed by King Cais. As to the first dust, it discovered the captives of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and all their property, and their leader was a knight, with shouts

and roars, vociferating, I am Harith, son of Zalim. Victory and conquest are thine, O Aboolfawaris! for the lion-warrior is at hand. The cause of this event was, that when Harith had slain Khalid in the private apartments of Numan, and had also murdered his son Shirjibeel, as we mentioned, Locait took him captive, and delivered him over to King Numan, who confined him till the days of festivity should expire. Mootejeredah learnt what had happened, and was not grieved at it, for he had killed the murderer of her father. So she sent to him five slaves, who had been brought up with her as her brothers, and ordered them to exert themselves in his liberation. Tell him, said she, to go to the tribe of Abs, and proceed to my brother Cais, and Antar, and demand their protection. The slaves went forth accordingly, and waiting till they found an opportunity, they entered, and slaying the guards placed over him, they gave him his liberty, and mounted him on a horse.

Harith set out, travelling over the wastes, not crediting his escape till he had passed the tribe of Aamir, when lo! he met the Absian captives, and their property under the conduct of the hundred horsemen. Harith was delighted. The Aamirites did not recognise him, but they made at him, and surrounded him. He stood firm, and cried out, Well! would ye exhibit your cowardly superiority against me, a single person? Ye are ignorant of my rank; for I am he who slew your Chief Khalid, son

of Giafer, and clothed ye with the greatest shame. Calamities were easy to him; he assaulted them, and his vehemence became still more furious, till mid-day, when he had slain seventy of their bravest horsemen, and the remainder resolved on flight. The Absian slaves released their chiefs, and the women also assisted them. The nobles being liberated from the chains and disgrace, started forth like ravenous lions, and surrounded the remainder of the Aamirites, whom they destroyed to the last, and left not one alive. With expressions of gratitude to Harith for this deed, they alighted in that place, when Harith related to them the various accidents that had happened to him, and what Mootejeredah had done for him; and I am now going, he continued, to your King, to demand his protection. Alas! said Malik, Ibla's father, such distresses as have befallen our King and people were never felt by the heart of man. And he informed him of their captivity, and that Antar was now fighting. Return with me, said Harith, this moment to Antar, that we may join him in the contest, and aid him in these adversities.

But as to the second dust, it was the dust of King Cais, who arrived with three thousand of the renowned Arabs of the tribe of Ghiftan, and they were come to rescue their property and families; but they were abandoned this time by the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as King Cais approached the troops and armies, he uncovered his head and at-

tacked, his companions doing the same, and shouting, O by Abs ! O by Adnan ! whilst Harith and his followers shouted, O by Marah ! O by Dibyan ! At this cry, Antar's heart took courage, and was calmed. He roared and bellowed in his well known voice : Hail then the day, so inauspicious to the foe ! As Locait had already imparted to Ahkwedh the occurrences between him and Harith, he was greatly amazed at his release ; shouting out to the tribe of Darem, he rushed upon Antar and Harith. King Cais assailed the foe with his party, and confronted the tribe of Aamir. In less than an hour the two armies were promiscuously thronged—the dust arose—the scimitars laboured—the barbs pierced the sockets of eyes—blood gushed out from the nostrils—the noble steeds were thrown down—the swords hacked right and wrong—ribs were broken, and waists cut through. Antar and Harith performed deeds that confounded beholders. Harith's heart was full of rage against Locait, so he sought him over the plain, as he hewed off necks and throats with his sabre, till the earth was crammed with carcasses. Antar also wished to bear himself the weight and evil of the battle ; so the flame of war blazed furiously, and the blows continued among them till the light departed ; and on that day the tribe became a proverb. At last the two forces divided, and the tribes of Aamir and Darem were defeated. Locait retreated in repentance ; for six hundred of his horsemen were slain,

and three times as many of the Aamirites, who were annihilated; and when they halted, the battle was calmed, furious as it had been. Antar met Harith, and to his inquiries about him, he related his adventures from beginning to end; and now, he added, I am come to demand your protection, O Aboolfawaris, and the protection of King Cais. Antar having tranquillised his mind, and promised him security, Harith was rejoiced, and thanked him. Antar went to King Cais, accompanied by Harith, and told him what he had narrated, and how he had aided them with his exploits. Cais thanked him for his friendly exertions, and promised him assistance, and the extinction of his oppressors. At hearing this, Harith thus addressed him :

“Hola! hail to your lands and your tents; as
 “long as ye live, hail! hail to the man who seeks
 “your asylum, whom troubles and adversities have
 “oppressed! I have endured things not to be ex-
 “pressed in words, not to be described by all my
 “powers of speech. I have plunged into horrors,
 “and I am come in haste to a King who extin-
 “guishes foes and heroes. O Cais, thou art an
 “active hero, and a knight whose accomplished
 “wisdom defies all imitation. I must tell thee,
 “that I slew Khalid, and made him drink to the
 “dregs the cup of death. Truly thy sister released
 “me by force from prison, when I was watching,
 “and all around were asleep. I retaliated for thee
 “with my scimitar—I have redeemed thy due from

“ him who was thy foe—I have travelled over the
“ deserts till I reached a party of Aamirites, with
“ whom were thy captives: they were in ignominy;
“ they were mourning in anguish the cruel vehemence of the dusty fight. Ibla too was shrieking
“ in captivity, and her tears were streaming down
“ her cheeks. She was exclaiming in her disgrace,
“ Where is Antar, that he might see my dishonour,
“ and what I suffer in my debasement? I released
“ the captives from them with my furious assault,
“ and in my heart I loved and pitied them. I am
“ now come from the land of Irak, bent towards
“ thee to seek thy protection, thou noble-born!
“ Art thou not the brave in war, Antar, to whom
“ the stalking lions bow in submission? O knight
“ of Abs, to thee I make my complaint, my sorrow,
“ and griefs; to thee, who feelest no affliction. Be
“ my support then, O Absian youth, and aid me;
“ for he who seeks thee, is soon free from pain.
“ Protect me against Numan; there is none but
“ thou to defend me from myself and from dreadful
“ events; for when thou appearest, thou art feared
“ and dreaded; and thy perseverance resists every
“ attack. How many are the horses thou hast left
“ plundered of life, and their riders sleeping on the
“ earth! When they hear thy name on the day of
“ battle, fear may be seen fluttering in their hearts.
“ Every tribe knows, that where thou art the battlement, there dwells no affliction. All the kings
“ of the earth fear thee in battle, for thou standest

“ alone brave among men. Asylum and refuge
“ can never fail mankind : thou art the protection
“ against the adversities of fate—thou art raised up
“ to the brilliant shooting stars by courage—thou
“ hast raised thy station above Pisces. Mayst thou
“ never decline in glory, in eminence, and honour,
“ whilst the sun shines, and darkness disappears !
“ O Cais ! O crown of Kings ! one whose exaltation
“ no one can attain, protect me, for this day I am
“ come to thee to try thy protection, thy faith, and
“ thy engagement.”

King Cais was much pleased at Harith's verses. By the faith of an Arab, said he, were Chosroe or the Emperor of Rome to demand thee, they shall never set eyes on thee ; and thus also Antar swore, saying, Extinguish all thy fears and apprehensions, and be afraid of no mortal man. They then reposed in joy and happiness, and their enemies in sorrow and affliction, till the day dawned, when they renewed the fight, and bodies and souls were spoiled by swords and spears. It was a dreadful calamity, and a scene that would have turned infants grey, till about mid-day, the tribes of Aamir and Daren being defeated. Antar mangled their horsemen with his irresistible thrusts, and made skulls fly off with his sword : he chopped off hands and wrists, and hewed off wrists and joints. The Brandisher of Spears encountered Harith—they engaged—the combat raged between them till their blood flowed—they saw woe and misery, and the

earth and sky disappeared from them—they continued till the day closed; still they persisted in their deadly spear-thrusts; but at last the tribes of Aamir and Darem took to flight. The Absians, seeing their confusion, pursued them, destroying them with the cleaving scimitar, till the whole country was obscured. Then the Absians retiring with the spoils of the warriors, and their arms and corslets, and dispersed horses, reposed in that spot; after they had expressed their thanks and gratitude; every one congratulating his neighbour on his safety.

In the morning they departed with the women and families, and plunder, and cattle, and set out for their own homes. Antar delivered the booty he had taken from the tribe of Darem to his uncle Malik, saying, O uncle, when I possessed myself of this plunder, I laid it aside for the celebration of the wedding-feast. My nephew, said his uncle, we will soon accomplish your wishes, and on reaching home, we will occupy ourselves only in our pleasures. Antar's heart was comforted at these words, and soothed at this promise; but the words of his uncle were all fraud and guile, and his heart was full of rage and resentment. When we arrive, said King Cais, who also heard this, we will only wait three days, and then we will marry Ibla to Antar, before any other impediment comes upon us; for our foes are many, and we have traitors amongst us: moreover, the calamities of fortune are not to be trusted,

for we are not secure from King Numan, should he demand the aid of Chosroe, King of the Persians, against us, or should he invade us on account of Harith, son of Zalim. Then they hastened over the wastes and wilds; as Antar, by the side of Harith, thus recited :

“ I have opposed the revolutions of incontro-
“ vertible destiny. I have endured absence and
“ separation. I show the sentiments of love for a
“ tribe that would renounce me, and truly their
“ hearts evince no sincerity. I ease with hope my
“ sickened mind, and with exemplary patience that
“ never ends. My foes abuse me for my swarthy
“ complexion ; but some of my deeds should wipe
“ off that blackness. Ask the tribe of my acts, O
“ Ibla, and those who witnessed my exploits and
“ warlike deeds. I repulsed the horse and the war-
“ riors round me as they brandished their long
“ spears in their hands. I plunged impetuously
“ into a sea of death, whilst the flame of war was
“ furiously blazing: I returned tinged with the
“ blood of foes, and the foam of war, that drenched
“ my steed. How many did I rescue from the
“ dreadful scene in the glorious path of firm-
“ ness, reviving hearts with my sword two-edged
“ and luminous, whose point would cleave the
“ hardest rock, and a spear, whoever was pierced
“ with it, the perfect light never revisited his eyes !
“ Were it not for my sword, and the barb of my
“ spear, I could never have raised a firm support

"for the Absians. I am Antar; well known is my reputation, that I am the knight of the noble steeds."

At hearing Antar's verses, Harith's heart was gladdened, and he extolled him (for Harith was the vilest of men, and full of guile, and it was only his fear of Numan that made him humiliate himself: he also knew that all the united Arabs could not protect him, so he humbled himself to the tribe of Abs, and confided in Antar). They continued their journey till they reached their country. As to Malik, Ibla's father, all his projects had failed; he was melancholy and distressed, and he felt assured his daughter must escape out of his hands, and that Antar would be married to her, whether he liked it or not. So he took his son apart, and told him his secrets. My opinion, said his son to him, is, that you send to the tribe of Fazarah, and acquaint Rebia and Hadifah that Harith is with us; that he has demanded our King's assistance, and has confided himself to Antar: perhaps they will inform King Numan of this intelligence. On hearing this, Malik was aware that numerous advantages would accrue from it; and he immediately sent to Rebia to complain of his situation, and to inform him of what he did know, and what he did not know.

When they reached home, they pitched their tents, and being well established and settled, all the country and dwellings seemed secure in their inhabitants, and smiling in the return of its occupiers;

and it was all in confusion with feasts and entertainments, and convulsed with jollity and merriment. Antar conducted Harith to his habitations, and passed most of his time with him, anxiously expecting his uncle would fulfil his engagements, and on King Cais he depended for assistance and favour.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FIVE days after, came Khemisah, Ibla's hand-maiden, to Antar (he was at his mother's). O my lord, said she, be on your guard against your uncle Malik and his son Amroo; be not deceived by their words and promises, for he has broken his engagements. Now just about that time a messenger came to him from Hadifah and Rebia, desiring him to entice Antar out to the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, by professing great love and affection for him. There we will suddenly surprise him, and put him to death, and thus be relieved from his persecutions. We will just give you some slight wounds; so that when you return home, and King Cais questions you about the circumstance, you may say, some predatory horse surprised us; and as we were intoxicated, they treated us as you see; and thus you will remove this dishonour from your daughter! I have learnt this, continued Khemisah, from one of Rebia's slaves, called Maktoom, who loves me with the most faithful attachment. He communicated to me this plot. The maiden quitted Antar, whilst he formed his conjectures about what she had told him.

Now Rebia wrote to King Numan to inform him about Harith, and that he was with the tribe of Abs and Adnan, who had resolved to defend him against the world, and that Antar had also given him his protection. He also imparted to Malik, Ibla's father, what he had done. Antar continued in his doubts and his fears, till one day his cousin Amroo came to him, saying, O Aboolfawaris, my father invites you to a feast at the lake of Zatooolirsad. On hearing this, Antar entered his tent, and put on his most magnificent robes, under which he still kept on his coat of mail and breastplate; and as an additional precaution, in consequence of Khemisah's warning, he also girded on his famed Dharni; and Shiboob brought him Abjer. Antar mounted, and, together with his brother, proceeded to the lake of Zatooolirsad, where he found Malik expecting him, and his slaves were standing in front of him. He advanced, and received him kindly. Antar thanked him; but they had not been seated long, when they brought dinner, and afterwards the wine; and in the course of conversation, said Malik to Antar, I wish you would send to your friends, and invite all your associates, as many as you please, that we may decide on the marriage-feasts, and complete all your wishes: it is my intention not to leave out any one, high or low, but to have them all at the banquet, there to clothe the widows and orphans, that your name may be

celebrated: so do just what you please. Antar's heart was comforted at these words, and his mind felt quite at ease.

After this conversation they pushed about the wine-goblets; the damsels sung, and the time passed agreeably away, whilst Malik kept turning about to the right and left; and, as he cast his eyes towards the plains and the sand-hills, he continued coaxing Antar, and making him drink, till Antar perceived the slaves winking at each other: at this he was roused, and on his guard; and Khemisah's words were verified. Shiboob stood by him with Abjer's bridle in his hand, sometimes keeping close to them, sometimes walking round them, when lo! he saw the slaves encircling Antar, and Amroo clapping his hand on his sword, waiting the signal from his father. Shiboob set up the roar of a lion; Rise! rise, son of my mother! he exclaimed; quit these foul villains, for in their hearts are nought but intrigue and guile. Antar started up; he drew his sword, and was about to ply it among the slaves, when lo! the horsemen of Fazarah appeared, headed by Hadifah and Rebia, exclaiming, Rush on him on all sides; make at him with spears and scimitars! Antar on hearing this prepared to mount Abjer, when cried out Malik to his son, Smite him with the polished sword, and prevent him from mounting, thou poltroon! Accordingly, Amroo struck Antar about the waist, and cut-through his clothes, and reached the coat of mail, which we before mentioned;

so his attempt was foiled, and his expectations were frustrated. Already was Antar on the back of Abjer; he grasped his destructive spear, and made towards the troopers, before they could attack him, cursing his uncle, and upbraiding him. He met the warriors, and Shiboob flew before him, like a fawn; his bow was in his hand, and his quiver full of arrows. Antar pierced their chests with his spear, and Shiboob hurled them over with his shafts through their eyeballs and their throats. As to Jareer, he was quite frantic. Your projects, ye sons of adultresses and whoremongers, have failed in the chase of the devouring eagle, he exclaimed.

The day was nearly spent; but the obscurity did not come on before Antar had overthrown the horsemen, and had dispersed them; and the plain and the desert seemed too confined for them; they felt the blows and thrusts that hewed their armour: had a lion heard them, he would have fallen or fled. The warriors were scattered over the wastes, and they felt assured of destruction and calamities. But Antar overtook Hadifah, and as he was about to pierce him with his spear, Shiboob anticipated him, and smote Hadifah's horse with an arrow; he stumbled, and Hadifah fell. Antar dashed at him, and struck him the blow of high indignation, and cut through the two coats of mail, which enveloped him with its closely knitted rings, and the sword penetrated to his joints. Quitting him, he rushed at Rebia, and shouted at him; but he wheeled round in flight,

and endeavoured to avoid him, for, seeing his attacks that terrified him, and his blows that made him shudder, he cried out, What mean these assaults of drunkards? these blows of intoxication? this slave can never fight but death is at hand; and every achievement becomes easy to him. And he sought the tribe of Fazarah; and those who wished to escape followed him; but those who remained Antar left stretched upon the ground. Haml returned for his brother, who was lying on the earth; he dismounted, and fastening him on the back of his own horse, carried him off, following Rebia, whilst Antar's sword still played amongst those that lagged behind. At last retiring, he thus exclaimed:

“ See what the foe has done; but I am the conqueror over every rebellious unlamented enemy.
“ I have a sword whose brilliancy flashes like lightning, and when my hand wields it, it sparkles like the shooting stars. I have a spear whose barb exterminates the foe, and leaves him dead on the dusty earth. Whoever wishes to meet me, to him I exhibit death how easy, and life how difficult.
“ They wished to destroy me; but my firmly-grasped sword is in my hand, and the genii of the earth dread my blows. I am the Antar of horsemen in the field of battle. I pounce down upon the heroes, and they are satiated with my thrusts.”

He then returned in quest of his uncle Malik and his son at the lake; but he could find nothing of them (the fact is, he determined first to bind up

his wounds, and then to confine Ibla, and absent himself from the tribe). They must have returned to the tents, said Shiboob, and to-morrow there will be a deal of talking and disturbance. They set out for the dwellings, and reposed till morning, when Antar, being recovered from his intoxication, sent for Shiboob, of whom he inquired what had actually occurred. He accordingly detailed every circumstance; in confirmation of which he also produced his corslet, and lo! it was dyed in blood. Just then came in Khemisa in haste; O Abool-fawaris, said she, my mistress Ibla sends her compliments, and informs you that her father and brother have fled, vowing that they will never dwell with the tribe whilst you are in the country.

The cause of this, and the disgrace of Ibla's father was, that, having failed in his plan to destroy Antar, he was ashamed to return to the tents and habitations. Here we can no longer remain, said he to his son; I am resolved to repair to King Numan, and demand his assistance to soothe the sufferings I endure from this slave-demon: I will also inform him, that Harith is with the tribe of Abs, and that they have protected him; and this deed will be the cause of their total extirpation: and if Antar should be slain, against whom we have laid so many snares, then indeed all will end well; we will marry your sister to some one, under whose benignity we may live, and under whose awful influence we may be secure. Away! continued he to his slaves, seek the pastures;

tell Ibla, that I am become a wretched wanderer in the desert through fear of her infamy, and if she wishes to preserve her honour inviolate from the talk of the slanderers, let her seek refuge with my brother Shedad, for there Antar will never presume to wound her modesty. Upon this, he set out with his son early in the night, and travelled with all speed, on horseback; but the slaves returned, and informed Ibla and her mother of what had passed. I will not go, said Ibla, to the dwelling of my uncle: I will not stir from my mother's side. I have no suspicion of my cousin; for he will protect me from both strangers and relations; and never shall I be a captive whilst he resides among the tents. Having reposed till morning, she desired Khemisa to go to her cousin Antar's, as we have already observed.

Antar's heart burst; he felt as if his soul had quitted his body; and whilst he was in a state of profound melancholy, Oorwah and Harith visited him, and as they bantered him for his being so retired, he related what had occurred with the tribe of Fazarah, and that Rebia had sent to inform Numan of all that had passed; and, added he, between him and us enmity and war must unavoidably arise. As to King Numan, said Harith, trouble not yourself about him; for if I hear that he is marching against us, I will only take ten horsemen, with whom I will set out, and destroy his armies and camps. As to your uncle, O Aboolfawaris, it would be better to seek him: take with you one of

King Cais's brothers; follow him, conciliate him, and bring him back to the tribe on account of his daughter; for some one thus says, "the sorrow is relieved, and the pain diminished that inflames a love-sick youth, particularly when he complains of his misfortunes to a compassionate heart."

As Antar listened to Harith the tears gushed from his eyes, and his phrenzy became more violent. Just then entered a messenger from King Cais, saying, O Aboolfawaris, my lord King Cais summons you to his presence, for a messenger from Hadifah is arrived, stating, that he has a grievous complaint against you. Upon this Antar mounted, and repaired to King Cais, before whom he dismounted, and saluted him. O Aboolfawaris, said Cais, what is the meaning of this affair? how could you drink to such excess as to commit so outrageous an act? O King, said Antar, what have I done to deserve such a reproof? Hadifah's messenger has just arrived, said Cais, and he states that in consequence of your blows he has been nearly reduced to an untimely death; and he has couched his message thus—O Cais, I rode out one day with a hundred of my noble horsemen, and my cousin Rebia was also of the party. We passed your way, that we might congratulate you on your safety, and make our apologies for not joining your expedition, or assisting you against the enemies that had rebelled against you (the truth is, we had then a large body of horse in Yemen, which is but just now returned

in safety). We went to make our compliments, but Antar started up against us, when he was at the lake of Zatooolirsad; he was intoxicated; he slew my men, and overthrew my heroes, neither did he desist till he met me. But I imagine that when he saw me he was ashamed, for he instantly lifted up his arm with his sword and struck me, intending to murder me; and had not his uncle kept him off from me he would have followed us even into our country.—Great King, said Antar, by the truth of him who rooted firm the lofty mountains, and has the power of life and death, and makes the rain to fall in his bounty and munificence, verily all this is false; they only came to assist my uncle to destroy me, and to shed my blood. And Antar related every circumstance to the King, from beginning to end, adding, My uncle has quitted the country, and fled; there is no occasion for me to appeal against them, for their enmity towards me has been evinced a thousand times, and whenever my uncle appears a little inclined towards me, Rebia communicates with him, and estranges his heart from me: but as to what they say about the party of horse in the cities of Yemen, they tell the truth; for Hadifah and Rebia, when they knew that I was gone to release my nephew Hatal, sent after me one hundred horsemen, promising them cattle in recompense for my death. But Locait fell upon them, and slew most of them. All this has befallen me, and I concealed it from you, for fear they should say, Antar

commits violences and outrages; but I will soon show them the consequences of tyranny and oppression when the enemy returns and disgraces them.

King Cais easily distinguished the truth from the falsehood; for he was now put into the direct, straight-forward road. Return to Hadifah, said Cais to the messenger, and tell him, Cais says, by the faith of an Arab, there is no truth in thy words; Antar is right, and his evidence unquestionable. Moreover, every one that advises me to banish Antar from the tribe only wishes my destruction, and annihilation, for I am a man with many foes, and few allies. How often has Antar rescued your wives and families from infamy and disgrace; and moreover, I will not interfere between Antar and the tribe of Fazarah, for they have provoked him a thousand times. Thus he sent back Hadifah's messenger, and took Antar to the tents, where he learnt all his sorrows and the outrages he had endured.

Antar had remained in this way five days, without relishing his meals, or sleep, when Ibla and her mother sent for him. Know, my cousin, said Ibla, that your uncle and his son have turned their faces to the desert and the wilds; it would be advisable for you to go after them, and pursue their track, for this has happened to them by the advice of Rebia; so be kind to my father on my account. Antar's heart was instantly calmed. Returning home, he sent for Oorwah, and his father Shedad, and summoned Harith, and his uncle Zakhmet-al-

jewad, to whom he related the conversation that had passed with Ibla and her mother. I am resolved, added he, to follow my uncle, when it is dark. I will punish him for his conduct towards me in thus listening to the advice of those accursed enemies. I have only sent for you to ask your advice on this point, and to recommend Ibla to your kindness, for I fear my expedition will be long. As to Ibla, said Shedad, she shall not stir from my dwellings, and she shall be kept for you till your return. See how it has turned out, just as I before mentioned, said Harith; let us two go together. By the faith of an Arab, said Oorwah, I will not remain apart from you. I must be of your party, for when you are away from the tribe, all the country is black as night, in my eyes. Antar expressed his thanks, they made every preparation, till the gloom of night coming on, they mounted, having first drowned themselves in armour, and mailed themselves in corslets, and girded themselves with scimitars, and slung their spears over their shoulders. Shiboob went ahead, like a male ostrich, and when they were at some distance, said Antar to Shiboob, Conduct us by a road where we may meet neither friend nor foe. Come then with me, said Shiboob, and see the miracles I will perform; and when I have brought you out of this land, I will arrange every thing to your satisfaction. Thus they hastened over the wilds and the sandhills, under the night, till they came nigh to the land of the tribe of Aamir, where

Shiboob having concealed them, said to Antar, It will be well for me to go forward, and bring you some news. Away then, said Antar. Shiboob put on the clothes of a pauper of Yemen, and set out traversing the countries and plains, whilst they remained in anxious expectation of his return all that day and night, till the morning, when Shiboob appeared like an ostrich, and with him a slave, as black as a thunder-cloud, whom he was dragging along with a rope round his neck, and when he stopped, he shouted at him, and pulled him with all his force. Antar was amazed; Who is this slave, Ebereah? said he. This is the slave of Ramih, son of Sabah, said Shiboob, and from him I have had some news of your uncle and his son; he has informed me, that they are with his master in torments, and disgrace, and his master is the chief Ramih, the lord of the tribe of Jibhan, and he is threatening them with death, morning and evening; for when I quitted you yesterday evening, I penetrated into the land of the Aamirites, and there this slave met me, advancing from the quarter of the valley of Zorood. Who art thou, wandering in the obscurity of the dark night? said he to me. Of the tribe of Aamir, said I, and what dost thou want? Son of my aunt, I am of the tribe of Jibhan, replied he, and my master has sent me to Akhwedh, son of Giafer, and the Brandisher of Spears, to congratulate them on the fall of Malik, son of Carad, and his son, into troubles and difficulties with my master Ramih; so that

they may come to him, and witness their death, for they are their enemies. At hearing this my reason fled, and my distress increased. Come along with me, said I to him, that I may conduct you to the tents of Akhwedh, son of Giafer, for he is my master. So he went along with me, my hand locked in his, whilst I continued to question him about the circumstances of Malik and his son's accident, and kept occupying his attention, till the wings of darkness were spread out, when I gave him a cut over the shoulder with my dagger, and having mastered him, I bound him fast, and here he is. At this, Antar's wrath was kindled into a burning flame. He went up to the slave, Whence art thou coming? said he. From the land of Aniziteen, my lord, replied he. And how was it your master obtained possession of that Absian and his son? asked Antar. Know, my lord, added the slave, that my master, Ramih, was returning from a feast, to which he had been invited, and with him was his wife, Daad-ool-aamiriya, and also a horseman called Abd Minah, who is the champion of our country, and the knight of our tribe, and as they came nigh home, they met this Absian and his son, travelling over the sands; so he took them prisoners, and returned to his own country, where he chastised them in the severest manner, chaining them up with the dogs. On this, Harith ran up to the slave, and, raising his sword in his hand, smote him, and severed his head from his body, saying, O Aboolfawaris, it is my opinion, we should

traverse the land, and perhaps we may overtake your uncle, and rescue him from torture ; and I am convinced that, after this affair, he will be like a slave to thee. O Harith, said Antar, were I to perform every act the tenderest friendship could imagine, it would only increase his hatred and obstinacy ; but with me he has a powerful intercessor, and that is his daughter Ibla, for whom my heart is cauterized, and “ she is the life that animates me, and for one “ eye let a thousand eyes be protected.”

They continued on the road towards the land of Aniziteen, and Shiboob conducted them across the wastes, followed by Antar and his comrades. As Antar thought of what his enemies had made him suffer, and how he had submitted to be subdued, he thus recited :

“ The revolutions of the world are easy to me ;
“ its inhabitants are of no account to me, and they
“ are of little value. In every scene of war there
“ is a report of me ; whenever they hear that
“ warriors were disgraced in it, I raise the dusty
“ storm, and the steeds charge, weighed down with
“ the indefatigable horsemen. I do deeds no one
“ else can do ; were other horsemen to do so, they
“ would be exhausted. I consent to be degraded
“ among men. I respect them, but my death they
“ esteem lawful. I am patient, on account of my
“ beloved, though they outrage me. I cannot re-
“ linquish my passion, but no pity do I find. Per-
“ haps fortune will favour me with possession ; for

“after the bitterness of absence, how sweet will be
 “enjoyment ! I am the Antar of the Absians, and
 “my name fills the atmosphere, hill, and dale. I
 “thirst for the blows of the flaming sword, and the
 “brave are rendered infamous through me. I send
 “them back, and they fly light and swift, and com-
 “plain of the spear-thrusts of which they are
 “wearied.”

Harith was much pleased at his expressions, and his eloquence, and being much surprised at his generosity, O Aboolfawaris, said he, had any part of what has happened to you happened to me, I should have slain my uncle, and every one that depended on him. I should have plundered his property, and have taken away his daughter, and made his wife a captive. That, O Harith, is what I will never do, said Antar, were I to drink of the cup of death, for could they even make me quaff of perdition, I can never do but what they please. I well know that what is fated must come to pass. Thus they travelled on over the wilds, till they reached the haunt of lions, near which was the abode of the tribe of Jibhan. Here they arrived about evening, and, halting in a by-place, they began to consult. Say not a word, said Shiboob, till I enter among the tents, and see how many horsemen are gone away from the tribe. O Shiboob, said Antar, we are four of us, and we disregard numbers, great or small, for victory is from God, and by the faith of an Arab, no one shall enter the tents, but you and

I, for I am very desirous this time to see my uncle, whilst he is suffering these tortures; perhaps it may appease the fury in my heart. How can that be? said Shiboob, you have such a particular way with you, and I fear they may discover us, and then we shall be killed, and we shall spoil all our good luck. What say you, you base-born fellow? said Antar; were the tribe as numerous as the sands of the desert, I will not permit any one to touch you, not an old one or a young one; and if the alarm should be given, I will show you what you may remember in your heart for ever. If it must be so, said Shiboob, and you are resolved upon it, off then with these arms; and Shiboob put him on a disguise, and took him away to the haunt of lions, where they cut two bundles of wood, which might be of use to them in the adventure. Each took up a bundle and proceeded. It was almost dark when they entered the tents, through which they continued to pass, attentively observing every thing, till they came to the tents of Ramih, where they saw Malik, and his son in extreme misery, tied up with the dogs. Behold your uncle, said Shiboob, let your grief be now assuaged. Antar threw his bundle of wood off his head, and Shiboob did the same; but they did not stop till Ramih, who was the chief of the Jibhanians, came out, attended by a troop of slaves, who laid out a sofa for him to sit on. He then began to talk to his shepherds, who were parading before him his horses and his cattle: and he in-

quired of them about the pastures and the grain. O my lord, said one of the slaves, I beheld a most extraordinary sight this day; for whilst I was in the valley of meadows, tending the flocks, I came upon the high road, where, behold! was a knight hunting the fawns. He was mounted on a black steed, and in front of the knight was a man on foot girded with an Arabian bow, and round his waist was a quiver, full of arrows, and both were in pursuit of a fawn, endeavouring to catch it. I stopped to look at them, when lo! the man on foot outstripped the knight. He seized the fawn by the left horn, and the knight, catching it by its right horn, and gazing in its face, thus in poetry exclaimed:

“Depart, and, ever in the protection of God,
“may no evil e’er overtake thee! for thou resemblest
“my love in her eyes, and her beauty, so depart in
“security. Although thy form resembles the dam-
“sel, no imagination can comprehend the virtues
“of her mind.”

As soon as the knight had finished his verses, my lord, he let the fawn go out of his hand, and it went off skipping over the barren waste, when soon two more knights joined them. And what is there so wonderful in all this? said Ramih; I suppose they are of the tribe of Cahtan, and that the evening has surprised them, and consequently they must repose in my land, and will quit it in the morning. Antar was much astonished at the fellow’s having remembered his verses (for it was he and Shiboob who

had chased the fawn). But Ibla's father, Malik, having also overheard this account, was convinced the man on foot must be the dusky Shiboob, and the knight Antar, so he said to his son, Should this be my nephew, on his way to release us from these dreadful tortures, never will I again harbour evil against him, never will I again listen to his foes. It is long, that I am without news of my slave, that I sent to Locait, said Ramih, addressing his slaves and troops, that surrounded him, and I am very anxious to put these two Absians to death; I am quite tired of keeping them night and day. It will be as well to wait, said one of his cousins, till they come to enjoy the spectacle, so that they may not blame you. Now Malik and his son heard this discourse, and they felt sure of death and perdition; but Antar and Shiboob were standing without, each leaning against his bundle of wood, the night covering them with its obscurity. Ramih having terminated his discourse, arose to go to the tents, and as he went by Malik and his son, he stood over their heads, and beat them over their noses with a whip, saying, May God curse the family to which you belong, for you are full of perverseness and iniquity, fellows of little generosity and justice, ever celebrated for perfidy amongst men, and falsehood is your clothing. Then addressing Malik, he said, So thou art one of the Absian sheiks, and a black slave has a thousand times done thee kindness, and has rescued thy daughter from

captivity and disgrace, and he is Antar, son of Shedad ; thou hast also taken from him a splendid dower in cattle, and hast affianced to him thy daughter ; but thou hast ever lied : may God curse that hideous face of thine, and all thy infamous transactions ! I will indeed cast thy flesh to the dogs, for thou art a lying sheikh : and Ramih went off to bed. Antar raised up the bundle of wood, and flung it on the fire ; he drew his sharp scimitar, making towards the dwelling where was his uncle, Malik. Shiboob followed his example. The slaves, who had charge of Malik and his son, were three ; they were stretched out in sleep. Antar put them to the sword, and not one of them stirred. Shiboob entered the habitation ; he was like a great camel ; he broke off the fetters from Malik and his son, saying, Take each of ye one of the swords of these slaves, and trot on before me, that my brother may defend ye with his sword, Dhami ; be grateful for his deed, and don't be niggardly of his bride, Ibla. Accordingly, they did as he desired them, and hastened away. But Antar, the illustrious warrior ; he stood near Ramih's tent, when lo ! Ramih issued forth, alarmed by the noise. Antar smote him, and made his head fly from off his shoulders ; then followed his brother, terrified on his account. The wood blazed, and the flames were furious, and the fire was extending among the tents. The dogs barked, and the warriors started forth, and they were all horror-struck ; every one drew his sword,

eager to discover what was the matter. -The night became bright as day, from the blaze of the fire, whilst Shiboob continued to urge on Malik and his son, and quickly passed through the tents. Antar followed them, wielding his sword. They proceeded into the desert, till terror fell on the inhabitants; when Antar, his uncle Malik, and Amroo, having mounted some of the scattered horses, Shiboob wished them to seek the haunt of lions, and escape from this terrible scene. But Oorwah and Harith joined them; for having heard the alarm, they determined to assist Antar, and accordingly brought his horse and his arms. He put on his breastplate and his girdle, he mounted his steed, and grasped his spear. Let us begone, said he, whilst they are occupied about the death of their chief.

And as they urged on their journey, Harith turned towards Malik to abuse him, saying, Who is like this noble lion, to whom every lion humbles himself or flies? How then could you hate and avoid him by flight? O Harith, cried Malik, I am a man whose eyes have been in a swoon, and those ever err whose errors are predestined by the God of old.

Malik dismounted, and, advancing towards Antar, humbled himself before him, saying, By the faith of a noble Arab, if I betray thee again, let me not be a man, and let me not be akin to the tribe of Abs and Adnan; for thou hast in this instance done a deed we never can forget, and thou hast resuscitated our lives after their extinction: comfort thy heart,

and let thy mind be at rest, for Ibla can suit no one but thee.

At hearing this, Antar's sorrows were relieved, and his afflictions were removed; he dismounted, and having embraced his uncle, they traversed the desert and the hills, till the obscurity was illumined, when lo! some Jibhanian horsemen overtook them. The cause of their arrival was, that when they heard the alarm, every one rushed out of his tent, inquiring what was the matter. The women told them what had happened to Ramih; so they re-entered their tents, and put on their arms, and galloped over the wilds; and amongst them was the knight of Jibhan, Abd Minah. He mounted with the other heroes, and sought the lands of Abs and Adnan, hastening over the wilds till they overtook Antar. O Ebe 'ool Ebyez, said Antar, perceiving that the horse had overtaken them, take my uncle, and his son, and Harith with you, and march over the desert whilst I keep off the foe. No, by thy life, Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah; we will not return but altogether; so also said Harith: but his uncle Malik, when he saw the troops making towards them with spears, and swords, was dreadfully alarmed; O Aboolfawaris, cried he, thou art our stay; 'tis thou must ward off from us peril after peril; on such a day as this I must remember thee.

Whilst they were thus talking, lo! another dust arose from the quarter of the tribe of Darem, and there appeared beneath it a troop of one hundred

horsemen, spear-armed, and headed by Locait, who was coming to assuage his heart in the murder of Malik and his son; and when they saw the Jibbanians, they raised their shouts till they came up with them, who acquainted Locait with what had happened to their Chief Ramih, and told them how Malik and his son had been released. This, said Locait, must be the act of that cunning Shiboob; for in the same manner he rescued Hatal, and then they plundered my property, and slew our slaves; but now they shall not escape me: attack them boldly, but do not despise them on account of their small number. Assault them with spears and swords; and particularly if Harith be with them. Thus he attacked with his men, and the desert was in commotion with the glitter of spear-barbs: they slackened their horses' bridles, whilst shouts and clamours arose. It was a frightful scene for Malik and his son; they both cried out in the name of Antar, and they were in a dreadful plight.

Antar was quite overjoyed, for he felt assured his uncle's perfidy was converted into sincerity; Which wouldst thou prefer, said he to Oorwah, their right or their left? or wouldst thou attack Locait? But Harith urged on his steed, and made against Locait, without noticing Antar, or speaking to him. Antar marked his actions, and followed him much delighted at his uncle's promises; and as he attacked, he thus burst out—

“ Rancour has quitted my uncle's heart; it has

“ vanished. When he saw what was just, he re-
 “ nounced his malice: my heart rejoices in his words ;
 “ how should it not, when I see his actions? But
 “ if he falsifies his promise, I will deliver him over
 “ to Him who sees us, and who firmly rooted the
 “ mountains. Away with the man, who, whenever
 “ I humiliated myself to him, failed me, and grieved
 “ me. On the day of the thrust of the spear, I am
 “ to him the noblest of knights by my maternal and
 “ paternal uncle; but when he is safe with his fa-
 “ mily, I am the son of Zebeebah, the tender of
 “ camels. O sword, be thou the judge between us ;
 “ when we are present in the battle, and when they
 “ fly, and when the spear-thrust exhausts the foe,
 “ tell them the messengers of death are here to mul-
 “ tiply the afflictions. What is passed, fate has de-
 “ termined ; and he who fights obtains glory. I am
 “ the Antar of War in the day of contests; these are
 “ my acts in pure truth.”

As Oorwah assaulted and heard his verses, he was amazed at his eloquence, as also were Malik, and his son, who thought it necessary to engage in company with him. Thus they attacked as the horsemen came upon them in every direction. The shouts mounted on high, and were loud ; the brave became proverbial ; the spear-barb drank of the blood of kidnies. Harith and Locait fought as no former tyrants ever fought ; whilst Antar dispersed the horsemen over hill and dale, filling all hearts with fear and dismay.

At the close of the day Antar had diminished their numbers; and having left the Jibhanians stretched out on the rocks and stones, he turned to Harith, and saw him still with Locait, and the tribe of Darem, engaged in a furious contest of fierce spear-thrusts. They had slain his horse; he had fallen to the ground. Locait shouted, and rushed at him; but Antar, who saw this calamity, roared and assailed like a shower of rain, when it deluges; he sought Locait and Harith in the most determined manner, dispersing the horsemen with his well-tempered blade. Oorwah also rushed towards Locait, and pierced him with his spear, penetrating his thigh even to the horse's back, and halted near Harith, till he had mounted him on one of the scattered horses, and then attacked the remaining Daremites. Remove this disgrace from me, my cousins, and fly not, cried Locait; soon will I bind up my wound, and return to the contest, and I will not have it said we fled from only four men.

Upon that his horsemen resisted, and extended their long spears: it was an hour to them that would turn warriors grey. They continued in this state till the day fled, and the night came on with its veil of obscurity; then fled the horsemen of Darem, Antar setting them on fire with unremitted thrusts. None escaped but those whose deaths were postponed, or whose bodies bore marks of Antar's spear.

Locait wished to persist in the combat, but he was incapacitated by the anguish of his wounds: he was

safe personally, but in his heart was a raging flame at having suffered this disgrace from five horsemen.

Antar retired, the blood trickling from his sleeves; and his uncle could not cease praising him whilst he traversed the desert. But Antar was not tranquil or at ease till they came near to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, bearing with them immense property; for they had plundered every horde through which they had passed; and just as they were going to send on Shiboob before them to inform the tribe of their approach, lo! one of King Cais's slaves met them; O by the Arabs, he cried, how lucky to meet you on the road! Antar was startled: What more have you to say? he exclaimed. What has brought you here? O Aboolfawaris, said the slave, I am now in pursuit of you, for my lord Cais has been much agitated since your departure; the loss of you has distressed him. Your father told him you were gone to seek your uncle, but did not know whither you had directed your course. The King was greatly afflicted, and despatched slaves one after another, who returned all disappointed; but I set out last night—No more of this talk, said Antar; what news have you of my father Shedad, and of the family of Carad? O Aboolfawaris, replied the slave, the tribe of Abs is in the greatest trouble and tribulation, on account of the rise of dissensions, and the devastation of the country; for you, my lord, know that Hadifah is a most perfidious fellow; his head is full of absurdities, and he can-

not bear to see any one possessed of a he or a she camel, particularly whilst that Rebia is with him, instigating him with all his art and deceit: and now too there is between Hadifah and my Lord Cais a controversy and a wager about the speed of their horses, and the people are alarmed at death and misery.

Now it happened that when King Cais sent his slaves after Antar, one of them returned and said, My lord, as to Antar, I can hear nothing of him; but on my way home, I passed by the land of the tribe of Temeem, and I slept in the dwellings of a clan called the tribe of Riyah, where I saw a colt amongst the colts most remarkable for their beauty. It belonged to a man called Jabir, son of Awef: my eye never beheld the like of this colt, and never did I mark one of equal velocity in the race-course. Cais's heart was captivated at the account of this colt, and his anxiety was very great. Now this colt was one of the miracles of the age, and the most beautiful animal the noble Arabs had ever brought up. It was the most illustrious of all the Arab steeds in birth and pedigree, for its sire was called Ocab by the Arabs, and its dam Helwee, whose rapidity the lightning even envied. Nations were enraptured at her form, and the tribe of Riyah had long exulted among the Arabs on account of this mare and stallion. Now the sire of this colt was returning home with Jabir's daughter by the side of a lake (it was just then the time of meridian heat): it was there he

beheld the mare Helwee standing by her master's tent: he neighed, and burst his halter. The damsel was abashed, and let him go, and hastily took refuge in one of the tents out of her extreme modesty and bashfulness. There the stallion remained till the damsel again came forth, and caught him by the halter, and led him to the stable; but her father seeing her disorder, that could not be concealed, questioned her: so she told him what had passed. At this, the sparks flashed from his eyes, for he was an ill-conditioned fellow; and he immediately ran to the middle of the dwellings, and raising up his turban, cried out, O by Riyah, O by Riyah! and instantly the Arabs collected round him, to whom he related the whole affair, saying, My cousins, I will not leave the seed of my horse in the womb of Helwee, neither will I sell it for cattle or camels; and if they will not let me extract the foetus out of her, I will commission some one to kill her. Come on, do what you please, they all cried; for we will not oppose you (now it was the custom of the Arabs to act after this manner in those days). So they brought him the mare, and tied her down before him; he sprung up, and turning up his sleeves to his shoulders, he brought a bowl of water, and washing his hand in the water, he mixed up some clay, and thrust it up the mare's belly, with a view to destroy what was originally ordained by God to exist. But the mare became with foal without any harm, and the fellow returned, his passion being now cooled.

And there was only wanting a few days of the year when the mare brought forth a perfect colt ; and as the owner of the mare beheld it, he was greatly pleased, and all his apprehensions were at an end. He called it Dahis (thruster), in allusion to what Jabir had done.

The colt turned out more beautiful than its sire, Ocab ; broad-chested, long-necked, hard-hoofed, open-nostriled, its tail sweeping the ground, sweet-tempered, and, in short, the most extraordinary animal that ever was. They brought it up, and it increased in size for a long space of time, and it became like an arch of a palace, till one day its dam going out to the lake, followed by its colt, Jabir, the owner of Ocab, chanced to see it ; he rushed towards it, and carried it off, leaving its dam to bewail its loss ; and saying, at the same time, This is my colt, and I have a greater right to it than any one else.

The news soon reached its master, who immediately assembled the chiefs of his tribe, and after he had told them what had happened, they repaired to Jabir, and reproached him, saying, O Jabir, you had your will of your cousin's mare at first, and had your due, and we decided that point for you. But now you wish to seize his property and outrage him. No more talk, said Jabir, none of your abuse ; for, by the faith of an Arab, I will not surrender it to him till you put me to death, or take it from me by force ; and I will stir up a war against you. Now

the tribe was unwilling to excite dissensions. We like you too much for that, said they, on account of the kindred between us. We will not fight you for it, were it even an idol of gold. Now the owner of the mare and colt was called Kereem, son of Wahab, a man peculiarly famed for his liberality and generosity among the Arabs; and when he perceived Jabir's obstinacy, O my cousin, said he, as to the colt it is yours, and it belongs to you; and as to the mare, here she is before you, and let her be a present from me to you, in order that the colt and its dam may not be separated; and let me not appear a person capable of defrauding his cousin of his property. He then turned away, and made over the colt and its dam to Jabir. The tribe highly applauded his action; but Jabir was so abashed at his kindness to himself, that he returned the dam and colt back to him, and with them a handsome string of he and she camels. Dahis turned out a most perfect animal in every respect; and when his master wished to race him against another he rode him himself, and would say to his antagonist, Precede me an arrow's shot, that I may overtake you and pass you; and he not only came up with him, but outstripped him far; and to any one that saw him he appeared like an arrow in its most rapid flight, or a star sped with calamities. When Cais heard of this he was quite beside himself, and he could not sleep. He sent to its master, Kereem, saying, Sell me this colt for whatever you choose of gold and silver, that I may

send it you without delay, and there be no room for reproach. Kereem was highly incensed and indignant at this message. Cais must be a dolt or an ill-bred fellow, said he. What! does he suppose that I am a merchant to sell my horses, or that I am unable to ride this horse myself? By the faith of an Arab, had he sent to request Dahis, as a present, I would have sent it to him immediately, and with him a string of he and she camels; but in the way of traffic this can never be, were I even to be made to drink of death.

The messenger returned to Cais, and told him Kereem's answer, at which Cais was exceedingly enraged. Am I the King of the tribes of Abs and Adnan and Fazarah and Dibyan, said he, and shall a foul Arab presume to contradict me? And he called out to his men and warriors; instantly armour and coats of mail sparkled, swords and helmets glittered, the bold heroes mounted their hard-hoofed steeds, they slung on their spears, and set out for the land of the tribe of Riyah; and as soon as they came nigh they rushed upon the pastures in the morning, and carried off an immense quantity of cattle, which Cais surrendered to his noble cousins. After this he invaded the tents and dwellings, for the inhabitants were perfectly unprepared for any such catastrophe. Kereem also being absent on some military excursion with his men and chiefs, the Absians attacked the habitations, and captured the wives and daughters. Now Dahis was tied

amongst the tent ropes, for Kereem never rode him in battle, fearful of death, or some accident; and one of the slaves, who was in the dwellings, happening to perceive the invading host, went up to Dahis, intending to burst the heel-ropes by which he was tied; but he was totally unequal to that difficult task. However he mounted him, tied as he was, and struck his sides with his heels, and he flew away with the slave in the excess of his high spirit, and continued springing and skipping like a fawn till he reached the desert; and though the Absian horsemen galloped after him, they could not even overtake his dust. As soon as Cais saw Dahis, he recognized him, and his anxiety to possess him increased; he advanced towards his rider, whilst his regret was exceedingly violent, because he was aware that if he pursued him he should never succeed in his hopes, however eagerly he might follow him. The slave, being now at some distance from the Absians, dismounted from the horse, and having untied the heel-ropes from his feet, again mounted, King Cais still pursuing him; and when he came nigh, Stop, O Arab, he cried, you have my protection and security, by the faith of a noble Arab! At this the slave halted. Have you a mind to sell that horse? asked King Cais, for you have fallen on a purchaser the most wistful of all the Arab warriors. I will not sell him, my lord, said the Arab, but for the restitution of all this plunder; and it will reflect some honour on me that I shall have made him of so much value and con-

sequence. I will buy him, Arab, of you, added Cais, and here is my hand in confirmation of my engagement and bargain. The slave instantly agreed, and dismounting from the colt, delivered it over to King Cais, who mounted in the fulfilment of his hopes, ordering the Absians to restore the cattle they had taken; and they did so, not detaining even the value of a halter. Thus King Cais possessed himself of the horse, and being overjoyed at his success, returned home. As soon as they were established, Cais, out of his great fondness for Dahis, used to feed and rub him down with his own hands. And soon the account of Dahis reached the tribe of Fazarah; and in the heart of Rebia the flame of envy was kindled. Hadifah also was in a similar state, and they wished to contrive his death. My opinion, said Rebia, is that you have patience for some time, till Cais cool in his passion for him, for he is now completely devoted to the horse*.

* The race between Dahis, King Cais's horse, and Ghabra, Hadifah's mare, is historically true; in consequence of which a war was kindled between the two tribes, that lasted forty years: and it became a proverb amongst them; so that whenever a dispute was with difficulty allayed, they would say, the battle of Dahis and Ghabra is arisen.

It is also stated that Cais was the owner of both Dahis and Ghabra, and that Hadifah was possessed of two mares, which he ran against the former two. That Hadifah injured Dahis is also mentioned, and that Ghabra won the race; but that Hadifah, being unsatisfied, raised troubles and dissensions, which lasted for forty years.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ABOUT that time Hadifah gave a grand feast, at which Carwash, King Cais's cousin, was present; and when they had eaten their dinner, and the cups of wine were circling round, the conversation turned upon the most famed chieftains of that period, till having exhausted that topic, they began talking of their celebrated steeds, and their races in the desert. O my cousin, said Carwash, there never has appeared such a horse as my cousin Cais's, Dahis: there can be no competitor for superiority, for he startles every one that looks at him; he is the antidote of grief to every one that beholds him, and he is a strong tower to any one that mounts him. Thus he continued to describe him in such glowing terms, that the hearts of the tribe of Fazarah, and the minds of the family of Zeead, were in agonies. Hear him, my brother, said Haml to Hadifah: this is quite enough, continued he, turning to Carwash, all that you have said about Dahis is stuff, all nonsense, for at this day there are not finer horses than mine or my brother's. Upon this, he ordered the slaves to parade the horses before Carwash, and they accordingly exhibited before him the horses of the family of Beder. Here, Carwash, said Haml,

look at this horse. It is not worth his dried fodder, said Carwash. They then paraded Hadifah's horses, amongst which was a mare called Ghabra, and a stallion called Marik. Look, Carwash, at these horses then, said Hadifah. They are not worth his dried fodder, repeated Carwash. Hadifah, very indignant at these expressions, exclaimed, What ! not even Ghabra ? Carwash. No, said Carwash, not Ghabra, nor all the horses on the face of the earth. Will you make a match for King Cais ? said Hadifah. Yes, said Carwash, that Dahis will beat all the horses of the tribe of Fazarah, had he even on his back whole kintals of stones. They disputed, asserting, and contradicting each other, till said Hadifah, Well then, let the winner take as many he and she camels as he pleases. You will play me false, Hadifah, said Carwash, and I do not wish to take you in. I will not bet you more than twenty she camels, to be paid by the owner of the beaten horse ; and thus the business was settled. Having finished the day in eating, they reposed that night ; but early next day Carwash rode off, and sought the tribe of Abs, till coming to King Cais, he told him all about the bet. You have done wrong, O Carwash, said Cais. You might have betted with all the world, but Hadifah, for he is a very obstinate fellow, and full of shifts and pretexts. But if you have settled the bet, I must cancel it. Cais only waited till his company had quitted him, when he mounted his horse and repaired to the tribe of Fazarah, whom

he found seated in the midst of the dwellings, with their dinner before them. Cais dismounted; he bared his arms, and seated himself amongst them, and began eating their dinner, like a generous Arab. Cousin, said Hadifah, wishing to quiz him, what large mouthfuls you take; Heaven defend us from your voraciousness! I am indeed hungry, cousin, said Cais, but by Him of hereafter and heretofore, I am not here merely to eat your dinner, but I am come to dissolve the wager, which was made between you and my cousin Carwash. I request you will break the bargain, for every thing that happens over the bottle should be annulled and forgotten. Know then, Cais, said Hadifah, I will not be off the bet, except that I receive the he and she camels, and when you have produced them, it will be perfectly indifferent to me. However, if you wish, I will seize them by force, or if you like, I will renounce them by way of grace. Whatever Cais could say, over and over again, Hadifah still kept to one side of the question; and as Hadifah's brother only laughed at him, Cais was in a violent passion, as he said to Hadifah, (his face all flushed with rage) How much was the bet between you and my cousin? For twenty she camels, said Hadifah. As to the first bet, Hadifah, said Cais, I dissolve it, and I will lay you another, and let the wager be thirty. Forty, said Hadifah. Fifty, said Cais. Sixty, said Hadifah; and they continued rising till they made the bet a hundred she camels, and consigned the contract

into the hands of a man called Sabic, son of Wahab, whilst a crowd of old and young collected about them. What distance shall we run? said Hadifah to Cais. Forty arrow shots, said Cais, and we have an archer called Ayas, son of Mansoor, (for there was no Arab at that day could shoot like him, and the Arabs had made him quite a proverb). King Cais was anxious indeed for a longer race, on account of the strength of his horse's muscles, for the greater distance he went, the more his spirit and animation increased in his movements. Determine then, said Cais to Hadifah, when the match shall take place. Forty days, I think, said Hadifah, will be required to train the horses. Very well, said Cais; and the affair was mutually settled, that the horses should be trained forty days, and the race-ground should be near the lake of Zatulirsad; and the horse that should arrive first should be the winner. Cais having given his consent, he returned to the tents. Cousins, said one of the Fazarah horsemen to his neighbours, be assured dissensions will arise between the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, in consequence of this race between Dahis and Ghabra: the two tribes will be disunited, for King Cais is come in person, and he is a prince and the son of a prince. He has endeavoured to annul the bet with Hadifah, who would not consent, and this will be a business that will occasion a contention that will last nearly fifty years, and many will be destroyed in wars and battles. As to that, said Hadifah, I care not about

it, neither will I follow such advice. I will soon describe to you, O Hadifah, the end of this, your obstinacy with King Cais, said Ayas, and thus he addressed him :

“ In thee, O Hadifah, there is no beauty, but in
“ the purity of Cais there is no stain ; how pure is
“ his advice, and how becoming ; but propriety is im-
“ planted in him. Bet then with some one who has
“ not in his possession even an ass, and whose father
“ owns not a horse. Give up Cais, for Cais has
“ wealth, and possessions, and horses, and a fiery
“ spirit, and moreover, that Dahis, who in the day
“ of the race is pre-eminent, when he moves or stands
“ still. He is a horse, when a night of dust sheds
“ its obscurity, you may see his hoofs like a fire-
“ brand.”

O Ayas, said Hadifah, thinkst thou I will shrink from my word ? I will have the camels from Cais, and I will not permit my name to be banded about as one incapable and beaten ; let things have their course.

When King Cais reached the tents, he first ordered his slaves to train his horses, but to be most particular in their attention to Dahis ; and then he related to his brother and his uncle Asyed what had passed between him and Hadifah. It was on that day Shiboob arrived, and gave the news of Antar's return, to the great joy of King Cais. All the tribe of Abs went out to meet him, and saluted him. King Cais took him by his side, and received him most honour-

ably, and conversing with him, asked him what had occurred during his excursion. Antar related every circumstance concerning his uncle Malik; how he had rescued him from punishment, and released him from the dogs; and, in reply to Antar's inquiry about the horse-race, Cais repeated what had occurred between him and Hadifah. O king, said Antar, calm your heart and brighten your eye, run the race and fear not; for, by the faith of an Arab, if Hadifah moves or excites any disturbance, I will kill him, and I will kill the whole tribe of Fazarah. Thus they continued, till they reached the tents, but before Antar would enter the tent of his cousin, Ibla, he went to look at Dahis, and walked all round him, and saw that he was the wonder of the world in qualities that astonished every one; and Antar having comforted Cais's heart, went home. By the faith of an Arab, said Harith, it would be better to renounce this business than to persist in it, (Harith was related to the tribe of Fazarah, and he was afraid that Antar would bring down upon them a violent death.) Antar reposed that night in his tents, but the next day came Sinan, son of Ebe Harithah, to King Cais, from King Numan, and the cause of Sinan's coming was Hadifah's messenger, who reached Numan, and told him that Harith was with King Cais and Antar, Who are resolved, said he, to protect him against you and Chosroe Nushirvan, and all the inhabitants of the wilds and wastes. I cannot imagine, said Numan, that my brother-in-law

of the tribe of Abs will protect the murderer of my son ; and he immediately ordered Sinan to repair to King Cais and Antar, and to demand Harith of them. Sinan accordingly departed for the land of Abs and Adnan, and arriving on that day he proceeded to King Cais, and told him he was come to demand Harith ; For it is reported, said he, that you have given him an asylum. King Numan has sent me to you, saying to me, If Harith is with King Cais, tell him to surrender him to you, and do you bring him to me. Now I am his surety, and you know the consequences. Cais was much troubled. I know, O Sinan, said he, you are an old sheikh, and many persons submit to your opinions. You have learnt that Harith has slain my father's murderer, Khalid, son of Giafer, and for our sakes he has exposed his life, and when he fell into King Numan's power, my sister rescued him from death. She sent him to us, knowing well that we should protect him. We will not surrender him to any Arab of the wilderness : had he come to us, when we were sufficiently secure in our tents, perhaps we had driven him away from our tribe ; but as a consummation of good fortune, he met our prisoners with the tribe of Aamir, and rescued them with his sharp sword, and he has behaved generously towards us, first and last ; we cannot therefore dismiss him from our protection, were even our heads to fly off before him. The man is under our protection, and neither King Numan, nor Chosroe Nushirvan, shall have any

authority over him ; not a hair of his head will we deliver up, till after the blows of the thin-edged scimitar, or the thrust of the well-proportioned spear ; let Numan be pleased or angry, just as he likes. They were thus conversing, when lo ! Antar came in, brandishing his sword Dhami, for he had heard of Sinan's arrival. As he entered, he did not salute or speak, but turning upon Sinan, Thou despicable sheikh ! he cried, thou artful dog ! art thou he that is come from King Numan ? Were I not in the presence of this king, I would make thee drink of thy death. Avaunt ! begone ! away to him who sent thee ! tell him from me that I have protected Harith, neither will I deliver him to an Arab or a Persian ; and if Numan sends us another messenger, he shall not return from me but degraded and repentant. Sinan arose, and was struck with horror ; he was confounded and bewildered ; he immediately departed, and in his heart was an unquenchable flame, and an unappeasable fire against Antar. In the meantime, Hadifah had heard of Antar's return, and that he had encouraged Cais to the race. O my brother, said Haml, I fear, should Antar fall on me, or one of the family of Beder, he will kill him, and we shall be dishonoured. Annul the race, or we shall be annihilated. Let me go to King Cais, and I will not quit him, till I persuade him to come to you to request the bargain may be broken, and his perverseness be satisfied. Do as you please, said Hadifah. Accordingly, Haml mounted his horse, and

immediately went to King Cais, without asking any permission, and there he found his uncle Asyed, who was a wise and sensible man. Haml saluted him and kissed his hand, and exhibiting great interest about Cais, O my cousin, said he, know that my brother Hadifah is but an ill-conditioned fellow, and full of intrigue. I have been these three days abusing him, in order to induce him to abandon the wager. Well, said he, at last, if Cais again returns to me, and wishes to be off the bargain, I will annul it; but let not the Arabs hear that I abandoned the bet in fear of Antar. Now you know, my cousin, that to forbear with cousins is the greatest of kindnesses, so I am come to request that you will go with me to my brother Hadifah and ask him to give up the race, before any disturbances arise, and the tribe be driven away from its native land. At hearing Haml's discourse, Cais was abashed; for he was easily persuaded, and was of a noble birth and origin: he immediately started up, and leaving his uncle Asyed in his place, he accompanied Haml to the country of Fazarah, and when they were half-way between the two hordes, Haml went ahead of Cais, whom he thus praised; at the same time blaming his brother Hadifah, in these lines :

“ O Cais, be not incensed against Hadifah, for
 “ he is a vile obstinate fellow, and iniquitous in his
 “ deeds. O Cais, if you pertinaciously persist in
 “ this wager, destruction will be its result, and its
 “ consequences will be fatal. I fear that my brother,

“ for his foul deeds, will suffer what the youth
“ Kelthoom suffered, who raised his brother to high
“ honours; but he swerved from propriety, and
“ became a rebel, and his power was annihilated.
“ O Cais, both you and Hadifah are high-spirited,
“ and on that account I am in great affliction for
“ you. Renounce all private interest, be kind and
“ generous, before the oppressor becomes the op-
“ pressed.”

HamI continued abusing his brother, and admiring Cais, till they reached the tribe of Fazarah by evening, where they saw Hadifah and the chieftains assembled together. Cais saluted them, and throwing his eyes round, saw Sinan seated by Hadifah's side. He disguised his feelings, and exclaimed, O Sinan, return, if thou wouldst exert thyself in the cause of peace and friendship, and the preservation of the blood of noble horsemen. O King, said Sinan, I am paralysed on that point; by the faith of an Arab, I cannot possibly redeem my life from death, for you know that I am Harith's surety with Numan, and as I cannot return, I have sent my comrades to acquaint him with my situation, and in the mean time I am come hither to seek an asylum till you and your brother-in-law Numan decide on your future movements.

Now this speech of Sinan's was all dissimulation and deceit; and he only came to the tribe of Fazarah to embroil the two tribes, and to work their mutual destruction; for when the scene between him

and Antar was over, Sinan rushed out quite stupefied. Away, said he to his companions, away to King Numan, and tell him all you have heard from the black Antar, that contemptible fellow; and desire him to send intrepid armies against the Absians, to root out every vestige of them. As to me, I will repair to the tribe of Fazarah, to plot the death of Antar, and the Absians, that I may extirpate them, and knock down their boundary marks.

His companions hastened to King Numan, but Sinan reached the tribe of Fazarah, and Hadifah received him with great distinction, asking the cause of his arrival. I am come, said he, to carry away Harith from King Cais; but Antar has said to me so and so: I have therefore sent to Numan to tell him what Antar has said, and what Cais has done. In the mean time I am come to you, and I cannot possibly think of returning home till I have contrived the destruction of Antar and Cais, and not left a man of them alive. Hadifah told Sinan all about the horse-race; and I have just sent Haml, he added, to King Cais, and it was my intention to make peace; but now that you have imparted this to me, I will never give my consent to any accommodation: and just at that moment arrived Cais and Haml.

Hadifah, as soon as he saw Cais, resolved to overwhelm him with shame, as Sinan had recommended. As to thee, said he to his brother, pray who ordered thee to go to this man? By the faith of a noble

Arab, were every human being on the face of the earth to importune me, and should say to me—O Hadifah, do but relinquish one hair of these camels, I would not relinquish it till after the sword-blow that cleaves, and the spear-thrust that penetrates. Cais blushed, and remounted his horse, reproaching Haml for his conduct. The night was now advancing, when Cais, convinced that this affair was entirely owing to Sinan, thus spoke his rebuke:

“ In truth I abhorred the horse-race, fearful of
“ outrage; but my adversary is staunch to his bar-
“ gain: I said gently, Hadifah, abandon it, and
“ hear what I in my clemency say. But he was
“ violent; and as he saw me become milder, he be-
“ came still more outrageous. Such intemperate
“ acts are iniquitous: they insulted me when they
“ saw me gentle, and I am called a great coward.
“ As to me, by Him to whom belong the pillar, and
“ the shrine, and Zemzem, and the wall, I have
“ that resolution in me, that will put to flight the
“ calamities of fortune, when they are even destined
“ by fate; and I have heroes that will meet the rush
“ of death with hearts incorporated in their whole
“ frames. O family of Bedr, although power con-
“ sists in command and prohibition, by my life, it
“ cannot last long: but he who has advised you this
“ day has erred, and over him will hover the birds
“ of death.”

King Cais applied the latter lines to Sinan; he then proceeded till he reached home, where he found

his uncles and brothers sitting in anxious expectation of him, and in a state of the greatest inquietude. O my son, said his uncle Asyed as soon as he saw him, thou hast done a foolish deed, for thou hast degraded thyself. Had it not been for Sinan, said Cais, I should have accommodated the business; but now there is nothing for it but the race and the wager. He then communicated to them that Sinan had taken refuge with the tribe of Fazarah, and had engaged to aid them with his advice and contrivances. They were amazed, and repented of having let him escape out of their hands.

King Cais reposed that night, and as he was fixed in the determination about the race, he trained his horse for forty entire days. The Arabs of that country had engaged to each other to come to the pastures to see the race; and when the forty days had expired, the horsemen of the two tribes assembled, and flocked to the lake of Zat-ul-irsad; and also Ayas the archer was there, who, turning his back upon the lake, to which the horses were to run, and moving himself towards the north, shot his hundred shots with his arrows, till he finished at a well-known spot. Soon arrived the horsemen of Ghiftan and Dibyan, for they were of one country, and between them were kindred and relationship, and all were called the tribe of Adnan. Cais had recommended Antar not to be present, he was so afraid of the occurrence of dissensions. Antar listened, but he could not stay quiet; and being

alarmed for King Cais on account of those dastardly Fazareans, who might betray him, he mounted Abjer. He girded on his sword Dhami, and taking Shiboob by his side, he joined the multitude in his fears for King Zoheir's sons; and when they approached, they saw him like a mailed lion; his sword was drawn in his hand, and his eyes were throwing out red burning coals.

As they all halted, they continued to look at him, till he being in the midst of them, cried out in a tremendous voice, Eh! noble Arab Chiefs, and illustrious men here present—ye know, that I am the favoured man of King Zoheir, father of King Cais, and that I am the slave of his munificence; it was he who admitted me to rank and kindred, and caused me to be numbered amongst the Arab chiefs; but though he did not survive, that I might repay him for his kindnesses, and make the kings of the earth subservient to him, he has left his Absian son as his heir, whom his other brothers have acknowledged, and have placed in the seat of his father, on account of his good sense and uprightness, correct judgment, and high rank; I am his slave, his property, the succour of him who loves him, the enemy of him who opposes him: never shall it be said whilst I am alive, that I ever saw him debased by a foe. As to this match, to which he has graciously given his consent, it is incumbent on us to aid him in all his wishes; so there is nothing more to be done but to let the horses go. Victory is from

the Creator of day and night ; and I swear by the sacred Shrine, by Zemzem, and the temple, and the eternal God, who never neglects his servants, and who never sleeps, that if Hadifah commits any act of violence or oppression, I will make him drink of death and vengeance ; I will make the whole tribe of Fazarah a fable amongst mankind : and, O Arab Chiefs, if you really desire the race, be impartial ; otherwise, by the eyes of Ibla, I will make the horses plunge through blood. Antar is right, cried out the horsemen in every direction.

Upon this, Hadifah selected for his mare Ghabra a jockey from the tribe of Dibyan, one who had spent all his life in bringing up horses, and had even passed the obscurity of night in that occupation. But Cais chose for his horse, Dahis, from the tribe of Abs, a jockey more expert and scientific than the Dibyanian ; and when each was mounted on his respective horse, Cais gave this recommendation to the Absian jockey :

“ Give him not the rein entirely ; if the sweat
“ and moisture burst out on him, wipe him with
“ your legs, and gently press against his loins ; but
“ if you push him too hard you will distress him.”

Hadifah heard what Cais had said, and he also wished to imitate him, so he gave his recommendation to his jockey, as follows :

“ Give her not the rein entirely ; if the sweat
“ and moisture burst out on her, wipe her with

“ your legs, and gently press against her loins ; but
“ if you push her too hard you will distress her.”

Antar laughed. By the faith of an Arab, said he, you are beaten. O Ebe Hidjar, expressions in poetry are not so deficient, and the application of verses is not so obliterated, that you should speak just as Cais spoke. Cais, however, is a king, and the son of a king, and he must always be imitated ; and your following him in your speech is a proof that your horse will follow his over the desert.

On hearing this, Hadifah's wrath and indignation were roused, and he swore an oath that he would not run his horse that day ; and would not race till the morrow by sunrise. Hadifah only desired that delay, in order that he might in his perfidy contrive some vile scheme ; for when he saw Dahis, he was amazed at his form, and the beauty of his points.

The judges dismounted, and the Arab horsemen were about to return home, when lo ! Shiboob cried out in a loud voice, O tribes of Abs, and Adnan, and Fazarah, and Dibyan, and ye all that are here present, wait for me a little, and hear words that shall be recorded from generation to generation. All the warriors halted : Speak, O Ebe Reah, said they, what is it ? Perhaps there may be some good in thy words. O illustrious Arabs, said Shiboob, ye have heard what has passed about the match between Dahis and Ghabra ; and I will stake my existence that I will beat both the horses, were each

of them to fly with wings, but upon this condition, if I beat I will take the hundred camels that are agreed upon; but if I am beaten I will give fifty camels. On this, one of the Sheikhs of Fazarah exclaimed, What's this, thou vile slave, that thou sayest? Why, if thou winnest, shouldst thou take a hundred camels, and if thou art beaten, shouldst thou only give fifty? Eh! you he-goat of a fellow, you dung-born, said Shiboob, I only run on two legs, and a horse runs on four, and he has a tail to boot. So all the Arabs laughed, much amazed at the conditions he made, and as they wished very much to see him run, they assented to the perilous undertaking.

But when they had returned to their tents, said Antar to Shiboob, Eh! thou son of an accursed mother, how canst thou beat these two horses, for whom the horsemen of the tribes have assembled, and say that in this age there are not their equals in the race, not a bird that can overtake them? By the truth of Him who produced springs from the rock, and who knows what is to be before it is, replied Shiboob, I will outstrip the two horses were each of them to fly with wings. Ay, thou black born, and much benefit will come of it, for when the Arabs hear of this circumstance, they will never again attempt to follow me when I run away over the deserts. Antar smiled, for he knew what was in his mind. Shiboob then returned to King Cais, and his brothers, and all the spectators, and engaged

on his existence that he would outstrip the two horses. All present were witnesses to his sayings; and they then separated in the greatest astonishment at his determination.

But as to the treacherous, perfidious Hadifah, when evening came on he sent for one of his slaves, called Damis, who was a great bully. O Damis, said Hadifah, you are ever talking of your dexterity, but hitherto I have never had occasion for you. My lord, said Damis, say what you want, that I may exert myself in the execution of your business. What I want of you is to go to the great defile, said Hadifah: remain there, and conceal yourself till morning. Mark well the horses, and see if Dahis comes by first; if so, bolt at him, strike him over the face, and make him start back. Let Ghabra run ahead of him that we may not incur the disgrace of being beaten; for when I saw Dahis, his appearance created doubts, and I fear he will beat my mare Ghabra, and outstrip her in the desert, and I become a derision among the Arabs. But how, my lord, shall I distinguish Dahis from Ghabra, when they both advance beneath the dust? I will assist you in some measure on their respective standards, he replied. Hadifah collected a number of stones, as many as were necessary to make him comprehend the standards. Take these pebbles, said he, and as soon as the sun shines begin to count them, and throw them on the ground in fours; when you have cast away two-thirds or three-

fourths of them it will be Ghabra, for this is her standard to that spot. If you see her advancing, let her pass, and do not oppose her; but if you have only thrown away one-fourth, or one-third, or less than that, then Dahis will be the first—rush out, strike him with a stone across the face, and drive him back on the desert, and let my mare Ghabra run ahead of him. The slave assented, and taking the pebbles went to the defile, where he concealed himself, and Hadifah felt assured of being the winner.

When the day dawned, the Arabs being collected from every quarter, were huddled together in one mass; the judges let go the horses, and their jockeys gave a loud shout; they started forth like lightning, when it blasts the sight with its flash, or a gust of wind, when it becomes a hurricane in its course. Ghabra shot ahead of Dahis, and left him behind her over the desert. Thou art thrown out, my brother of the tribe of Abs, cried the Fazarean, to the Absian, so comfort thyself in thy grief and distress. Thou liest, retorted the Absian; in a short time thou wilt see on whom the disappointment will fall: wait till we have passed these shingles; mares work better in such troublesome places than on plains and level grounds. When they came to the mead, Dahis launched forward like a giant when he stretches himself out, and he left his dust behind. He appeared as if without legs or feet, and in a twinkling of an eye he was ahead of Ghabra. Then,

cried the Absian to the Fazarean, send a messenger by me to the family of Bedr, and do you taste of the bitterness of patience in my rear. Shiboob all the while kept ahead of Dahis, like the northern blast, and he skipped along like a fawn, and rushed with the violence of a male ostrich, till he came nigh to the defile, where Damis was concealed. Damis had cast away of the pebbles less than a quarter. He stretched out his eyes, and saw Dahis advancing. Damis waited till the horse came up to him, when he shouted at him, and springing at him, struck him a severe blow with a stone over the eyes. The horse started back, and staggered; the rider nearly fell off; but as soon as Shiboob saw this, and spied out the subtle slave, he knew that he belonged to the base-born Hadifah. In the excess of his fury he rushed at him, and in haste drew his dagger, and striking the slave Damis, ripped out his entrails, and exterminated his existence. He then wanted to return to Dahis and coax him, when lo! up came Ghabra, like a gust of wind, tearing over the wide desert. Shiboob was afraid of being beaten, and that the camels would be taken from him, so he returned, and playing away with his feet made towards the lake, where he arrived first by two arrow-shot. Ghabra came on his heels, and Dahis came in last, bearing the marks of the blow between his eyes, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. The spectators were amazed at Shiboob's activity, and the power of his muscles; but as soon as

Ghabra advanced, arose the shouts of the Fazareans, and when Dahis came up in that state, the jockey informed the tribe of Abs what the slave had done. Cais saw the effects of the blow on the face of Dahis, and heard all the circumstances. Antar bellowed; he dashed his hand on his resistless Dhami; he roared out in a tremendous voice; he longed to put the tribe of Fazarah to death; but the Sheikhs prevented him—so he had patience—they went to Hadifah, abusing him and reviling him, for his infamous transaction. He denied it, and perjured himself with false oaths, swearing, he knew nothing about the blow Dahis received, and said, I demand my due; I will not relinquish my bet; I will not admit of this paltry excuse. This blow cannot but be of bad omen to the tribe of Fazarah, said Cais; God will truly grant us victory and triumph, and we must positively root out every vestige of them; for Hadifah only desired the race in order to produce troubles and dissensions, and that war and commotion might fall upon the tribes, that men might be killed, and children be orphaned. The conversation grew more violent, shouts arose in all directions, and the polished swords were drawn; the cries of the warriors were loud, and there only remained the rush to arms. Upon this, the Sheikhs and the wise men dismounted, and uncovering their heads, they penetrated the crowds, and humiliating themselves, they settled the business in the best possible manner, That Shiboob should take the hundred camels from

the tribe of Fazarah, the amount of the wager, and that Hadifah should abandon all further controversy and dispute; thus endeavouring to extinguish animosity, and to stop the rising tumults, and to calm the differences among the tribes. Then the families retired home, and in their hearts was as much of rahcour as filled their bosoms; but it was Hadifah whose resentment was the most vehement, and whose hatred and perfidy were the most virulent, particularly when he heard of the death of his slave Damis. As to King Cais, also, his heart was replete with passion, and rooted grudge, whilst Antar comforted him, saying, O king, distress not your heart, for, by the tomb of King Zoheir, I will bring down infamy and disgrace on Hadifah; it has been on your account I have hitherto respected him. And thus they dispersed to their tents. In the meantime, Shiboob, as soon as day dawned, slaughtered twenty of the camels he had taken, and distributed them to the widows and the maimed. Another twenty also he slew, and made with them a magnificent feast, and entertained the slaves and handmaidens of the tribe of Abs. The next day he slaughtered the remainder, and made a grand dinner at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, to which he invited the sons of King Zoheir, and the noble chieftains. When they finished eating, the cups of wine went round, and they all approved Shiboob's conduct. Now what Shiboob had done soon reached the tribe of Fazarah; how he had slaughtered the camels, and feasted the

illustrious Absians. So the fools of the tribe assembled round Hadifah. O Ebe Hajar, said they, we came in first, and the slave of those impostors has eaten our camels; send to Cais and demand your due, and if he sends the camels to you, 'tis well; if not, let us raise a roaring war against the Absians. Hadifah raised his head to his son Ebe Firacah: O my son, said he, instantly ride to Cais, and say to him, My father says, you must instantly pay him his bet, and then you will be generous, otherwise he will take it from you by force, and then you will be overwhelmed with affliction. At that time, one of the chief Sheikhs was present, and when he saw Hadifah resolved on sending his son to Cais, Eh! O Ebe Hajar, said he, art thou not ashamed to send such a message to the tribe of Abs? They are thy cousins: is this in conformity to reason, or the extinction of dissensions? Never mention such people, but to pardon and to do good. My opinion is, thou shouldst abstain from this obstinacy, for it will be repaid by extirpation, and the dust of war. Cais has been impartial, and has done no outrage; and as to the horsemen of Abs, make peace with them; it is more consistent with thy dignity. Mark thy slave Damis; he struck Dahis, the horse of King Cais, but how speedily God punished him, and left him dyed in his black blood. I have advised thee to listen to wholesome counsel; act worthily, and renounce such foul proceedings. After this, thou art aware of thy situation, and now look after thine own affairs. Hadifah was furious

at these words: Thou despicable Sheikh, thou false dog, he cried, shall I be afraid of Cais, and all the whole tribe of Abs? By the faith of an Arab, men of trust and honour, if Cais send not the camels, I will not leave him a tent standing. The Sheikh was greatly vexed, and to alarm him, thus said:

“ Outrage is base, O Ebe Hjar, for it springs
“ unawares, like the watchful night wanderers; be-
“ ware of its blows when swords are drawn: be just,
“ and clothe thyself not in infamy. Ask the well-
“ informed of Themood, and his tribe, when they
“ rebelled and committed acts of tyranny, he would
“ tell thee, how an order from the God on high
“ destroyed them in one night; he destroyed them
“ in one night, and in the morning they were laid
“ low, with their eyes fixed upwards.”

Hadifah, totally disregarding the Sheikh, and his verses, not only cursed him, but ordering his son, Away to Cais, said he; and thus departed Ebe Firacah for the land of Abs; and when he arrived, he entered the dwellings of King Cais, where, not finding him at home, he asked his wife Modelilah, Rebia's daughter, about him. What dost thou want of him? said she. I demand of him our due and our wager, replied he. Alas! for thee and thy due! son of Bedr, replied she, dost thou not fear such perfidy? Were Cais at home, he would despatch thee to the tombs. Ebe Firacah returned, and told his father what his wife had said. Hey! thou foul coward, said Hadifah, hast thou returned, thy

business unfinished, and frightened by the daughter of Rebia? Go back. It is now evening, said his son, let this be to-morrow's deed; and he slept that night in his tents, to take leave of his father and uncles. As to King Cais, when he came home, his wife informed him of the arrival of Ebe Firacah to demand the camels. By the faith of an Arab, said Cais, had I been present, I would have killed him; but it is over—let it pass. That night Cais passed in grief and sorrow, till the day dawned, when being seated in his pavilion, Antar came to him: he sprang up, and placing him by his side, told him all about Hadifah. And he has had the impudence to demand of us the he and she camels! continued Cais; but had I been at home, I would have slain him. Cais had not finished his speech, when Ebe Firacah stood before him. He neither made any salutation nor previous address; but said, O Cais, my father desires you to send him his due, and then you are generous; otherwise, he will mount against you, and take them by force from you, and then you will be overwhelmed with affliction. On hearing such words, the light became darkness in the eyes of King Cais: he snatched up a winged javelin; Thou son of a base cuckold, said he, how is it thou art not more civil in thy speech, when in the presence of one like me? and he smote him with the javelin through the chest, and it issued through his back, and as he was falling off the horse, Antar caught him, and lashing him on, he turned the horse's head towards the quarter

of Fazarah, and struck him with his whip over the flanks. The horse returned to his pastures till he reached his stable; and he was floating in blood. The shepherds carried him away to the tents, crying out, O misery! O woe!

A flame was kindled in the heart of Hadifah; he smote his bosom, and was in the greatest consternation, exclaiming, O, tribe of Fazarah, to arms! to arms! So the foolish ones assembled round Hadifah, and said, Arise with us against the tribe of Abs; let us retaliate on them. O my cousins, said he, lay not down this night but under arms. It was Sinan who urged on the absurd party of the Fazarah tribe; for it was his purpose to excite dissensions among the tribes; he also smote his bosom, and cut himself over the chin, as he cried out to the tribe of Fazarah, Vengeance! Vengeance on the tribe of Abs! leave them not a tent to live in.

The tribe of Fazarah reposed that night, having prepared all their implements of war and battle. By break of day Hadifah was mounted; the warriors were ready, and they left no one in the tents but the children, and those who had not the force to fight. Rebia was amongst those left behind, he and his brothers, saying, I will not war against my family. I will not be for them or against them. As to King Cais, after he had put Ebe Firacah to death, he was aware the Fazarah tribe would seek him with their warriors; so he also made preparations for battle: and as it was Antar who arranged

all King Cais's affairs, and put every thing in proper train; he mounted with the Carad heroes, and the Absians were immersed in armour and brilliant coats of mail. They made ready for the contest, leaving no one in the tents but the women, and those who were unable to stand. And amongst those left behind was Harith, who said, I will not engage the tribe of Fazarah, for they are my relations. This was a dreadful event for the two parties. They marched out against each other, and the sun had not risen when the dust flew on high, and the lightning of the scimitars flashed, and the whole region was convulsed; the light of day was obscured.

Antar was resolved to start forth and appease his heart, when lo! Hadifah came forward arrayed in sable robes, his heart and soul ulcerated with grief on account of his son. Son of Zoheir, he cried, it was not well to slay an infant; but it is well to issue forth into the scene of battle, that it may be decided by the contest of spears who deserves dominion, you or I. At this King Cais was vexed; he rushed from beneath the standards, resentment overpowering every feeling; he sprang at Hadifah. Urged on by the rancour they entertained against each other, they charged on their noble steeds till the day became black in their eyes. Cais was mounted on Dahis, and Hadifah on Ghabra. In the contest between them there past things unseen before; each tribe despaired of its master, and they resolved on the attack to assist them, that the vehe-

mence of the combat might be diminished. Just then intense were the shouts; the cries arose on high; scimitars were drawn; the spears were extended between the ears of the Arab chargers. Antar advanced towards Oorwah and his father Shedad; Attack with me these dastards, said he, and make to their right with the unsheathed swords, that we may send it rolling against their left. At that moment the elders of the two tribes came forward, and stood in the centre of the plain, their heads uncovered, their feet bare, and over their shoulders hung the idols. They presented themselves before the two armies (the horsemen were alarmed for the results), and thus they addressed them; O my cousins, by all the union of kindred between us, make us not a proverb against the ordinances of God's slaves: let not our enemies and our enviers have cause to reproach us; relinquish this controversy and dissension; widow not the women; orphan not the children; be satisfied with the blood that is against you among the Arabs; humble yourselves to the Absians, your cousins. We ask of you, how many nations before you has outrage annihilated! how many tribes have plunged into evils and calamities, but have soon repented of their impious deeds! how many men have swerved from propriety, and have stumbled into the pits of anguish and regret! Wait then for the destined hour of death; expect the day of dissolution; for it is at hand. Ye will be lacerated by the hovering eagles

of destruction, and you will be consigned to the gloomy recesses of the grave; then let there be no record but of your virtues when your carcasses become extinct. The Sheikhs did not desist from their harangue till that burning flame was quenched, and the passions of these resolute heroes were tranquilized. Hadifah retired from the contest; and it was decided that Cais should pay Ebe Firacah's price of blood with a great quantity of cattle, and a string of he and she camels. Neither did the Sheikhs quit the field of battle till Hadifah embraced Cais, and acquiesced in this arrangement. Antar roared and bellowed, O king, said he to Cais, what is this deed? What! shall the tribe of Fazarah take from us the price of blood for one slain, and the sword of our resolution thus brilliant? Shall our prisoners be ransomed but by the barbs of the spears? Shall the blood of our dead be shed unrevenged? Hadifah's rage increased: Eh, thou bastard! said he; thou son of a foul mother! What is it that honours thee or disgraces us? Were I not ashamed of these noble Sheikhs, I should have annihilated thy numbers by this time: I should have left thy women widows and thy children orphans. Hadifah's resentment then being inflamed, By the faith of an Arab, said he to the Sheikhs, who had exerted themselves in restoring harmony, I will hear no more of peace, were the foe even to plunder me with the points of their spears. Do not so, son of my mother, said Haml to his brother; ride not over the road of

folly; abandon such loathsome ways; be at peace with our cousins, for they are the firebrands of the zealous Arabs; their brilliant stars, and their dazzling suns. It was but the other day you outraged them, and ordered your slave to strike their horse, that it might fail and swerve from the direct road. As to your son, he was justly slain, for you sent to demand what was not your due. After this there is nothing so recommendable as peace; and he who seeks war is a tyrant and an oppressor. Accept the compensation and be tranquil, or else you will open upon us a flame that will burn us in the fire of hell, and thus he recited:

“ By the truth of Him who firmly rooted the
“ mountains without a foundation, if you do not
“ accept the compensation of the Absians you are
“ deceived. They call Hadifah chief; be thou a
“ chief, and be satisfied with cattle and wealth.
“ Quit the horse of outrage; ride it not; it will
“ conduct you to a sea of sorrow and affliction.
“ Hadifah, renounce violence like a liberal man,
“ and particularly the battle against the horsemen
“ of Abs. Make them a strong tower for us when
“ the foe charges us, in the Absian superiority.
“ Make them to be of the number of our friends,
“ for they are of the noblest resolution, and Absians.
“ And if Cais has acted oppressively, it was you
“ who taught him treachery a few days ago.”

When Haml had concluded, the chiefs of the tribes thanked him, and Hadifah having agreed to

take the compensation, they restrained him from acts of violence and hostilities. The warriors returned home, and every thing was calmed between them. Cais sent to Hadifah two hundred she camels, ten slaves, and ten female slaves, ten head of horse; and after this all was restored to peace, and the people remained quiet in their country.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SOME days after, Antar rode out in company with Harith and Prince Malik to the chase; and as they wandered far over the desert in search of game, they drove the wild beasts over the wastes, till the heat overpowering them, they returned to the valley of Ghadha, where was a party of Arabs established, called the tribe of Ghorab. Antar and his comrades drank at their wells, and whilst watering their horses, they observed a Sheikh, who was very infirm from the number of years he had lived; with him also was a young girl, like the thirsty fawn, in shape resembling the branch of the tamarisk. As soon as Prince Malik beheld her, he was bewildered, and a violent flame was roused in his bosom. He instantly turned towards her father, and saluting him, inquired after his health, saying, O Sheikh, what is this damsel to thee? My daughter, he replied, and of all my family and tribe she alone remains to me. She assists me in milking in the desert, and helps me as thou seest. Wilt thou consent, said the prince, that I become her husband, that I may make thee lord of all I possess in cattle and sheep, and I will remove thy poverty and thy

distresses from thee? The Sheikh smiled, and said, How can that be? My lord, I am but a poor man, and thou art a great prince. Speak not so, added Malik; think not, O Sheikh, it is wealth that adorns the man; lineage and birth are far better than property and worldly acquisitions. Whilst they were thus conversing, up came Antar and Harith, and asked Malik what was the matter? So he related his adventure, and complained to Antar of the agonies of love, saying, O Aboolfawaris, I used to accuse thee of folly when thou didst complain of thy passion, and I used to say love was only a phrensy till I tasted it myself, and beheld those eyes; but as soon as I felt it, I knew that in forbearance you must be the most patient of men, and the firmest against grief and affliction. Antar laughed, and perceiving that love had worked a change in his mind, O my lord, said he, if in less than an hour all this has been effected in you, in what a state must he be who for years has been seeking consolation, and has found none? Rejoice, said Antar, to the old man, at the departure of sorrow and poverty, and in thy future happiness. Marry thy daughter to this prince, that thou mayest become lord of the tribe of Ghorab, and ruler over its elders and youths. It all appears to me like a dream, said the man; there is nothing to be done but to accept her as a gift from me, without any fixed settlement, or calculated dower—that indeed is quite beyond my powers. When I am married to thy daughter, said

Malik, the Arabs shall see how I will requite thee. So he took his hand for the nuptials, and he succeeded in all his wishes.

Malik returned quite bird-hearted, and Antar congratulated him, and wished him joy. But when he came home he told his brother what had passed : By thy life, O my brother, what is this ? said Cais : couldst thou not consent to connect thyself with the daughters of our uncles, the sworn-bosomed damsels of the earth ? but must thou have recourse to the daughters of the tribe of Ghorab ? Reproach me not, O brother, said Malik, for what could not be resisted ; it is the only God that has power over love. Hearts communicate and meet of themselves, and the only messenger is the glance of the eyes. They were thus talking when Antar approached, who overhearing Cais reproaching his brother, God forbid, O king, said he, that you should rail at lovers, and increase the flames of passion. Your brother has not acted violently or oppressively, and has done nothing but what all the world has done before : you ought to partake in his sorrows, and not blame him or reproach him. Let him have his way in his passion, for he has not distressed you in any point for which you should rebuke him. On this the countenance of Cais brightened ; he wished him joy : As the business is as you describe it, said he, and you yourself encourage it, let us also complete your nuptials and his on the same day. That affair, said Antar, entirely depends on my uncle

Malik ; permit me to expect my happiness from the king of all slaves.

On the next day Prince Malik sent to the Sheikh he and she camels, and variegated robes, and cattle, and precious jewels, and howdahs, brilliant with magnificent velvet, and servants and slaves, and with them horses and sheep, ordering them to be expeditious, on account of the passion that was in his heart : and he appointed a certain hour on the seventh day. When all these presents reached the tribe of Ghorab, the old and young rejoiced ; they passed those days in the greatest delight, and slaughtered the sheep and the camels, and filled the goblets with wine, and they were perfectly happy to the exclusion of every sorrow. Soon after, Prince Malik clad himself in the robes of noble-born kings, and his beauty was more dazzling than the new moon. On this expedition Antar accompanied him, fearful lest some enemy should waylay him ; and he took ten horsemen and five of his brothers. They wandered through the Arab dwellings till they reached the tribe of Ghorab, and Prince Malik dismounted at the marriage canopy, his brothers also alighting round the tent. The feast immediately commenced ; the damsels waved the cymbals, and the horsemen flourished their swords ; exclamations of joy arose, and the cups went round ; and thus they continued till the laughing day was spent, when the nymph was married to Malik. All the chiefs and lords of the tribe soon fell asleep, on account of the watchings and

fatigue; but by morning their joys were converted into sorrows, and shots were precipitated at them from arrows, for which there is no surgeon; for fortune never gives, but it pillages; is never stationary, but it revolves; is never merry, but it sorrows; never bestows, but it takes back; never joys, but it grieves; never sweetens, but it embitters. Now the cause of the interruption of their happiness was, that Hadifah, having accepted the composition for the blood of his son from Cais, returned home. What hast thou done, son of Beder? exclaimed his wife; hast thou sold the blood of thy son for things that have no value? hast thou received, as the price of his blood, grazing flocks, and forgotten thy infamy and disgrace amongst every passing Arab? By God, no more shalt thou be my husband or my friend; I will never acknowledge a coward for my husband. Upon this she forbade him her presence for three days. On the fourth day he entered, and found her in great grief, the tears rushing down in torrents, whilst she thus expressed her sorrows:

“ Hadifah! thou wilt never be secure from the
“ foe; thou wilt never be protected from the ma-
“ lignity of misfortunes. What! has Cais slain my
“ only one, and hast thou accepted camels and
“ grazing flocks? Thou hast put on, O Hadifah,
“ garments of shame and indelible disgrace, even to
“ thy dying day. Dost thou not dread that thy
“ foes will say, Hadifah's heart is the heart of a
“ girl? Away with what Haml, son of Beder, said,

" every fated event must take place. Retaliate with
 " the barbs of the spears, and with the blades of the
 " thin scimitars; otherwise leave me, that I may
 " weep day and night in streaming tears. Haply
 " my death will speedily come, and the penetrating
 " arrows will overtake me. Shall I ever take to my
 " love a coward husband, whose life is the baseness of
 " life? Alas! alas! for my murdered boy—cruelly
 " murdered. Alas! he was stretched dead on the
 " desert! Behold the birds of the Erak, how they
 " mourn, like me, on the tops of the waving
 " branches! but does the turtle-dove feel an anguish
 " like my anguish, even when it is dashed down
 " with the arrows of dispersion? O day of the race!
 " I shall mourn thee for one who excelled in every
 " mental virtue. O that thy dawn had never seen
 " the night, and the face of the full moon had never
 " been shaded in obscurity! O horses of the race!
 " that ye had drank of poison, diluted in the purling
 " streams! that your backs had been weighed down
 " with the burthens of the firmly-rooted mountains!
 " for your race has cast a sorrow at me that can
 " never subside but in death."

At hearing these verses the tears gushed from the
 eyes of Hadifah; his regrets increased. (The women
 heard these verses, and the shepherds and the horse-
 men used to repeat them, and they were called the
 excitors of woe). Daughter of my uncle, said he,
 I only accepted the compensation by Sinan's advice;
 for when he saw the ancient Sheikhs issue forth

against us, and endeavour to make peace between us, Thy son cannot be recalled, said he to me, and it will be as well to listen to my advice: thus it is; take from Cais the compensation, renounce violence and hostility; then station over Cais and his brothers some spies and emissaries, till you catch one of them; kill him, and thus accomplish your designs: fight them at your pleasure, but just now you cannot possibly succeed. This conversation took place between him and me, and ever since we made the peace, I have had spies stationed over the Absians, and I will afflict them in one who is the dearest of the tribe. Thus he continued to soothe her, till the account of Prince Malik's marriage in the tribe of Ghorab reached him; and immediately he assembled his brothers Awef and Handhala, to whom he communicated Malik's situation; but not a word would he say to his brother Haml, because he was aware he would not obey him in such a project. His brothers assented, and they set out with seventy horsemen of the tribe as soon as it was dark (but in his great exultation Hadifah forgot to ask his informant whether Antar had accompanied Malik). They travelled over the wilds till they reached the tribe of Ghorab by morning, and they found them all asleep. Hadifah observed the nuptial canopy apart from the tents; he made towards it, and the horsemen encompassed him, preceded by his brothers. As the horses galloped forward the slaves started up, and the earth far and wide was in com-

motion. Shouts arose among the horsemen. Antar sprang upon his stallion, and the tribe of Ghorab mounted in all fifty horsemen, old and young. Antar was the foremost in the contest; and when he saw the men, he knew, beyond a doubt, they were of the tribe of Fazarah: he soon recognized Hadifah and his brothers; Hola! O Ebe Hajar, he cried, this day will I bring down destruction upon thee; it was for such a day as this that I have waited. I must indeed appease the anguish of my bosom on ye all, ye wretches! He shouted at the horsemen and assailed them, playing away his spear through their sides; Abjer, under him, hastened down, like a torrent, rushing against the horses. But Hadifah, beholding his exploits, was afraid lest he should fail in his attempt; he determined, however, to avail himself of the opportunity; he burst into the nuptial canopy, there to slay Malik, and make his friends mourn for him. Whilst he was forming this resolve, lo! Malik rushed out upon him. He was scarcely awaked from sleep, immersed as he had been in the sweetest of enjoyments. He was also intoxicated, and his garments were scented with musk and saffron. As he beheld Hadifah, and the horsemen prepared to attack him, he was inflamed with ardour, and a foolish pride worked through him. Moreover, being anxious to exhibit to his bride a proof of his courage, he mounted his horse, he snatched up his spear, and he assaulted in his arrogance, making at Hadifah and his brothers, and crying out, I am

Malik, son of Zoheir ! He shouted on his steed ; he was intoxicated, and his hand being unable to direct the bridle, his horse precipitated him to the ground. He attempted to arise in the excess of his spirit, but Hadifah overtook him on his mare, and smote him with his sword on his skull, and the instrument descended half way down his body. Convinced that he had killed him, he returned to his comrades, crying out, O retaliation of grief ! But being afraid of Antar, and well aware were he to find him he would make him drink of a violent death, he fled in haste home, and his fury subsided.

He left Antar occupied with the remainder of the Fazareans, and no one followed him, but those who were more immediately about him. The party opposed to Antar were soon diminished, and most of them being slain, he returned to Malik, just to see him in the agonies of death, where he was lying bathed in blood in front of his horse. At this sight he screamed and threw himself upon him : he smote himself with his hands like a woman deprived of her children. O full moon of perfection ! he exclaimed, never, never did I imagine such would be thy end. And he let his head fall upon his knees ; he kissed his face till he nearly swooned upon his body ; and his tears streamed over Malik's cheeks, who at last just opened his eyes. He attempted to speak and move his lips, but he could not, so violent was the fate that had fallen upon him ; he could only point with his fingers towards him ; he bade him farewell,

and his spirit groaned in the excess of agony. Antar's afflictions became more vehement; and whilst they were in this state, behold! Malik's bride rushed forth, her face uncovered, her hair dishevelled, and surrounded by a number of women and high-bosomed damsels beating their breasts and throwing dust upon their heads. Malik's bride smote her cheeks with her hands: and when she reached the death-place of her husband, she thus spoke:

“ I will weep for thee, not in festivities or nuptials, but in spears, and swords, and shields. I will weep for him who is gone, and has abandoned me after having become my husband. I will weep for him who is gone and made me heir to interminable grief, even to the end of time. I will weep for the full moon, whose light is fled, whose glory is eclipsed and destroyed. Alas! my lord has vanished from me; he has left me a solitary being; he is concealed from me in the darkness of the grave. I am left forlorn in the morning to mourn my beloved, whom I knew but yesterday. I will weep for him: I will mourn for him as long as the moon of heaven and the sun shall shine. No joy shall ever again please me; never again shall my soul be at ease. I will weep for my lord; I will grieve for him who has widowed me on my marriage morn. O that before his dissolution I had drank of the cup of death in my soul. I will make fortune and the

“ world weep in concert with me for my beloved,
“ or my senses must be annihilated. Never will I
“ cease to mourn him in sorrowing strains, as long
“ as the bird of the Erak shall pour its piteous
“ notes.”

Malik's bride did not cease till Malik, with a sigh, expired, and he was united to his God. Antar wrapped him up in his clothes, and tying him on the back of his horse, took him away; and as he sought the land of Abs, he thus exclaimed :

“ Alas ! O raven hastening in thy flight, send me
“ thy wings, for I have lost my support. Is it true
“ that I have seen the day of Malik's death and
“ murder, or has it befallen me in a dream? The
“ light of day is darkened in grief for the youth,
“ the hero of Abs and of Ghiftan. O that Ghabra
“ had never been ! that Dahis had never been !—
“ that the day had never been, when that wager
“ was made ! O it was a day black in look, harsh
“ and stern, the night wanderers of evil might dread
“ its calamity. O by God ! my eyes will ever be
“ ulcered on his account in ever streaming tears,
“ till the moment I see the bones of Hadifah dis-
“ persed, and death close upon him. Alas ! my
“ force is weakened ; I am weighed down by mis-
“ fortune, and my heart is in continued palpitation
“ for him who was my strength whenever the foes
“ unsheathed their swords against me to cut off my
“ fingers. Now he is gone, who will be our de-
“ fence when the nocturnal invaders shall surprise

“us? O woe is me! how fell he from his horse,
“and my sword and my spear were not near him?
“The fated arrow of the all-bounteous Archer cast
“him down. O that when it cast him down, it
“had cast me down too! O that my soul had bade
“farewell, and that his hands had not beckoned to
“me a double adieu! Alas! his kindnesses, were I
“to comment on them, my tongue would fail ere I
“could repeat them. I swear I will not sleep from
“taking vengeance! I will not repose, but on the
“back of my stallion. Never shall my sword cease
“to cleave those Fazareans, till the desert be converted
“into a sea of crimson blood. Sons of
“Beder! your power will not be the strongest
“when we join the plain in the day of spear-thrusts!
“if I do not make blood flow on account of Malik;
“and leave his foes in the mansions of disgrace,
“may my heart never cease, night and day, to
“repeat to me what has oppressed it, and cast me
“down. Soon will I extirpate the sons of Beder
“and all Fazarah; for I shall never have succeeded
“in my hopes, unless I accomplish my project
“in retaliating with the thrust of my spear and the
“blow of my sword.”

Antar returned to the tents, and there were only fifty of his horsemen and Malik's two brothers that had escaped, and they endured what no one ever endured before, so that they were nearly dead with grief. And as they approached the dwellings, Cais met them with the whole tribe in tears and mourn-

ing; his mother Temadhur smote her bosom, till she came close to her son, who was tied on the horse's back; and the land of the tribe of Abs was in universal convulsion. Cais wished to bury Malik, but his mother would not permit him. I will not bury my son till to-morrow, said she; I will go to our foe, and I will demand the blood of my son of the family of Beder, or never will the flame of my heart be quenched. We will never allow thee to do such an act, my mother, said Cais; we will not let thee go to our enemies, but we will go with our sharp-edged swords, and our tall spears, and our sturdy warriors. We will have vengeance for our brother, perfidiously murdered, and all the family of Beder will I put to death. Thus they entered the dwellings, and continued their grief and lamentation, insensible to all consolation for Malik.

As to Hadifah, when he returned to the tribe of Fazarah, he had but few of his companions remaining. Sinan met him, for it was he who contrived these projects, till this eventful disaster befel the tribe of Abs. His brother Haml and Rebia also met him. Well, said Sinan, hast thou effected the deed that we planned? We have sought the bird, and have chased it, said Hadifah, and when we had chased it, we sacrificed it. Oh! Hadifah, said Rebia, tell me the meaning of these words, for my anxiety is extreme, and I know you have nothing concealed from me. O Rebia, said

he, we must inform you ; thus it is, we have slain Malik, son of King Zoheir. On hearing this, the light became darkened in the eyes of Rebia. Verrily, cried he, you have passed all bounds in your perfidy. O son of Beder ; of evil omen will be this murder ; frightful indeed will be the consummation of this deed. Son of Zeead, said Hadifah, as his spirit was roused against him, there is no evil but near thee and the tribe of Abs. By the faith of a noble Arab, were there not engagements and sacred rights between us, I would make thy head fly off with this sword ; thou son of ordure, what means this talk ? Begone from us, whence thou camest in an unlucky hour, and be again of the filth of thy tribe ; and turning his bridle, he sought his own dwelling. As to Rebia, he went back to his brothers, and his mind felt relieved. He told them of the murder of Malik, and of Hadifah's actions, adding, This is the reward of him who abandons his relations, and takes refuge with strangers. He then made his preparations for departure, he and his brothers, and all that belonged to his family, and only waited till the sunset, when they set out for the land of the Absians. Approaching the tents, they perceived the whole population in confusion, with cries, and the Absians wandering over the desert. They had deposited Malik in the tomb, and the women were screaming in their tears. Rebia dismounted, and threw away his turban off his head, and tore all the garments he had on (his brothers

doing the same), and there was not one but whose grief was excessive, and sobs incessant. Rebia came up to the grave; he threw himself upon it, and embraced it; and as his sorrow, and tears, and sighs, and lamentations augmented, he thus spoke:

“ O unexpected misery ! O mind-distracting calamity ! O misfortune ! when I think of it, the light and darkness are one to me. “ O my eyelids ! perhaps ye will aid me in my grief, for to me all joy would be sacrilege. Aid me then, for I have lost a youth, the age could not boast of such another. O, I marvel how Malik could be encompassed in a tomb, and thus be hid, for he was a full moon ! the crown of Abs ! its glory ! its defence ! its honour ! its spear ! and its sword ! Aid me then with eagerness, O my friends, sleep not in vengeance for Malik. I swear by the sacred wall, and the shrine of truth, and also by Zemzem, and the Lord of the Temple, that I will not permit the retaliation of Malik to pass away, were I even, in its results, to drink of the cup of death.”

* When Rebia had finished, torrents of tears gushed from his eyes; he and his brothers hastened

* Abulfeda mentions that Rebia had sided with Hadifah on account of the quarrel that had arisen between him and Cais, when he forced him to resign the celebrated armour; that Cais slew Hadifah's son, and that Hadifah waylaid Malik, upon which Rebia returned to his allegiance.

to King Cais and embraced him, excusing themselves to him, and complaining of what they had experienced in their absence. After condoling with Cais, they repaired to Antar. Antar was seated by Malik's tomb, his head hanging over his knees. As Rebia drew near, he met him, and stood up, kissing his hand, and clearing their hearts of sorrow, and they all vowed to take retaliation for Malik. Rebia gave orders to his slaves, and they brought him twenty camels, which he distributed amongst the poor and the orphans, having first slaughtered them on the tomb of Malik. But King Cais's heart revolted at Rebia, for he was full of deceit and cunning, and he wished to put his friendship to the test. Waiting till night came on, he summoned one of his maidens, called Bedrah, and said to her, Hie thee to the dwellings of Rebia, and conceal thyself among the tents; quit him not till he is alone with his wife and asleep; listen to their conversation, for I fear again we shall be annoyed by Rebia's stratagems, and all our tranquillity vanish and be lost. The maiden set out, and stopping among the tents, she concealed herself among the baggage-camels; and when it was bed-time, Rebia came and laid himself down to repose. And as he was lying on his bed, his wife came unto him, and was about to take off her clothes and sleep by his side; but he cried out to her, Begone from me! the sorrows and anguish I endure, suffice me; after the murder of

Malik, what has a man to do with woman? Then as his regrets increased, he thus spoke:

“ Sleep is forbidden; for how bitter is the past
“ through fear of some evil tidings at hand. O, it is
“ an event to delight the hearts of our foes; it is the
“ road of mortals that turns the hair grey. For him in
“ the evening, women are in tears, and in agonies of
“ grief they remain with those that watch. What!
“ after the murder of Malik, son of our Zoheir,
“ does woman desire the results of marriage? He
“ who joys in the assassination of Malik, let him
“ come to our tribe by the light of day; he will find
“ the women full of sorrow, grieving for him in the
“ morning, before the dawn is illumined. They would
“ conceal their faces, and cover themselves, but in
“ the day they return to be seen by spectators.
“ They scratch their faces for the youth—pure as
“ the fountain stream—our intrepid Knight—the
“ emblem of joy—the high-minded hero—the pro-
“ tector of our women, and the remover of all
“ shame. When we adhered to him, we adhered
“ to a horseman, firm and resolute in the scene of
“ battles. I see nought for his murder among the
“ tribes, but the camels loaded with pack-saddles.
“ Knights, the rust of the sword is on them, as if
“ the steel were smeared with pitch; let every horse
“ of our steeds be led out, tractable, well-trained,
“ undaunted; that we may raise at Moreicab a dusty
“ war, and make them drink of cups of perdition.

“ He who joys in the murder of Malik, let him drink
“ of it at the edge of the deadly scimitar. Soon ye
“ shall know, if we once meet with the sword and
“ the spear, fraught with peril, who can caper his
“ high-blooded steed over the heads, and who will
“ gnaw his nails in shame. Do ye think we will
“ abandon Malik? No! by the God of the Shrine,
“ and secrecy! till we have exterminated your chiefs
“ to revenge him. O Haml, and your knights! O
“ Ebe Hidjar! O Absian Antar, charge over their
“ lands—God forbid thou shouldst forget retaliation
“ for Malik. O Aboolfawaris! never let the inva-
“ sion cease with the sabre, till they haste away in
“ flight. Show them the spear-thrust and the sword-
“ blow: Oh, slay for Malik the whole tribe of those
“ wretches! O Aboolfawaris, let there not be one
“ in their land to stand forth, or establish himself in
“ a tent! Sons of Bedr—ye shall not drink of the
“ cup of shame, but of the burning water of liquid
“ fire. O Cais, destroy them all for Malik, and re-
“ move the dishonour with the murder of Hadifah!
“ Kill Haml for him and Awef; let the flints of war
“ strike fire in retaliation, and I too will to-morrow
“ extirpate them, and will pierce them with the
“ mortal spear. I will abandon the carcasses as
“ carrion on the desert, as if they had drank of the
“ wine of calamity. If I do not execute my word,
“ then am I the offspring of illegitimacy, and a mine
“ of infamy.”

The damsel instantly quitted the dwellings in the

obscurity, and joined King Cais, to inform him of the beautiful rhymes she had heard; and he was delighted at the purity of Rebia's intentions.

When it was day, King Cais went out to the tomb of his brother; thither also came the chiefs of the tribe, and Rebia, and his brothers, and all his dependants. Cais welcomed him, and showed him great honour. Here they remained three days, but on the fourth day they assembled to consult, and they resolved on marching; they sought for Antar, but he was not to be found; no tidings of him whatever. This was a grievous blow, and his anguish was renewed; for he thought, he was enraged at the arrival of Rebia. He remained in deep melancholy till the forenoon, when behold, a dust from the quarter of the tribe of Fazarah arose. The Absians were confounded, till the dust clearing away, there appeared from beneath it he and she camels marching along, and howdahs, and an immense quantity of cattle. Cais was amazed, and galloped towards it to learn what it meant, followed by the horsemen; and as they came near to it, lo! it was Antar.

Cais advanced, and inquired what was the matter: O my lord, said Antar, as he wept for Malik, and sobbed, truly, I have pursued the track of the villains, and I have in some measure had retaliation for thy brother. Soon will the tribe of Fazarah come against thee; be prepared for the contest; brace up thy resolution, and summon thy men. This is thy brother's property, which he had sent as

the dower of his bride to the tribe of Ghorab; and it is come into my possession by the will of God. I have slain ten horsemen of Fazarah, and amongst them Awef, Hadifah's brother. Last night, my lord, I watched till midnight, when I fell asleep, and lo! my lord, Malik stood before me; and, beckoning with his fingers, said to me, O Aboolfawaris, dost thou sleep, and I unrevenged? Hast thou forgotten our former friendship? Before thee many have been faithful to their friends; be thou faithful also to him, who was slain but yesterday: and then he vanished, whilst the tears trickled down his cheeks. I instantly awoke from my sleep, and I felt like one misfortune-struck. I mounted, and took Shiboob before me, and sought the land of Fazarah, in the darkness of the night. I heard the noise of camels ahead of me; I approached them, and saw a hundred warriors, surrounding them right and left. I resolved to engage them, but ten of them turned upon me, the foremost of whom was Awef, Hadifah's brother, who cried out, I am Awef, son of Bedr. Overjoyed, I met him with a spear-thrust through the chest, and it passed through his back. I pursued the horse to destroy their riders; and I well know, I slew ten of their heroes, besides the men I wounded.

The cause of this was, that Hadifah, after his dispute with Rebia, consulted with his party, and sent his brother Awef to the tribe of Ghorab, with one hundred horsemen, saying, Drive hither the

property which Malik sent them, whilst the Absians are engaged with their sorrows: endeavour to bring me his bride, that I may rip open her belly, for I am resolved to destroy them root and branch. AweF did as he was directed, and effected his purpose. As to the women, he did not succeed with them, for they fled to the mountain-tops; but on his return he encountered Antar, and every vestige of him was erased; for speedily were ten of his heroes killed. The fugitives repaired to Hadifah, and as they communicated his brother's death, his life nearly quitted his body. He determined instantly to march against the Absians, but Sinan advised him to collect the troops of the tribes and the lakes, till Numan's armies should arrive. In this manner they continued making preparations for war and battle; and such was the treachery and stratagem they harboured in their minds.

As to Antar, he passed his time in his tent, like a spirit of the night, when lo! Khemisah, Ibla's handmaiden, came to him and said, O Aboolfawaris, my mistress sends her compliments to you, and tells you, that as this is the time of total abandonment to grief and sorrow, she wishes this night to go with a party of her cousins to the lake, and she desires you will go there also, to protect her from the night-wanderers of the time.

At hearing this, Antar was much delighted and overjoyed at the fidelity of his mistress's mind under all circumstances. So he took up his weapons im-

mediately, whilst Khemisa returned to Ibla, and informed her of his acquiescence and obedience. Now it is very remarkable, that Amarah at that period had stationed his spies over Ibla till that very night on which she went out to the lake, requesting her cousin to protect her. Informed by some of the women of this, Amarah could almost have flown with joy; but he waited till the darkness obscured the land, when he quitted the tents, and put on women's clothes that the hearts of the girls might not revolt at him. He continued till he came to the lake: staring about he saw the damsels, and Ibla among them, like a brilliant moon. At this sight his senses were in agitation; phrensy and distraction seized him, and he pounced down upon Ibla like a voracious eagle. She thought him a woman, but when she experienced the force of his muscles, she was aware that he who held her was a man. Fully sensible of the dishonour and infamy, she cried out in his face, Who art thou, thou black greasy pot! thou foulest of hogs? The damsels were aghast and amazed. I am Amarah, said he, whom you have repulsed and discarded. Ibla's heart fluttered, in hopes her cousin might be near her. She roared at Amarah like a lioness; Thou son of the ordure of cowards, dost thou not fear Antar?

Antar was a witness of all that passed, for as soon as Ibla had sent to him, he went out and concealed himself behind the sand-hills, where he waited till Ibla came with the girls; and they were amusing themselves among the hillocks when Amarah started

out. The universe turned black in the eyes of Antar: he burst forth like a furious leopard, till he closed on the cuckold Amarah. He roared and bellowed at him, and seized him by the small of the belly, and raising him, he dashed him on the ground, and almost pounded his bones. In the excess of his terror Amarah was in a most unseemly plight; he was dying in fear of Antar, who on seeing his ridiculous situation, laughed in the violence of his rage. Arise, thou greasy black pot, he cried; mayest thou never drink of rain, or a drop of moisture, thou bastard! Were it not out of respect for the women and thy kindred, I would behead thee with this sword.

But as to Ibla, when she saw Amarah in such a filthy state, she spit at him, whilst the women surrounded him, and laughed at him. Antar, indeed, would have put him to death, had not this happened to him, and Ibla also interceded for him. The girls ran away, roaring with laughter, and he had nothing for it but to retreat to the lake and take off his clothes, and wash his legs and his thighs: and thus he returned home without his clothes, well aware, too, that this event could not be kept secret from the tribe, but that the girls would tell it all over the place; he went to his mother and his brothers, blubbering most piteously, and told them what had happened to him. Thou unlucky wight! said Rebia, what need hadst thou to do this? Verily, thou hast made us a tale of tales: never can we raise up our heads to any one again. Never, never, said

Amarah, will I quit the tents again; never will I let a creature see me—not a walker or a rider, if you do not retaliate for me, and remove from me this shame. Oh! that I had thought better of it, and had left myself dead by the side of the lake! Oh, that I had not seen myself in so foul a condition! and Ibla too, she laughed at me, and cursed me, and stopped her nose at me. Thou accursed fellow, thou son of an accursed woman, cried Rebia—what retaliation wouldst thou? The man has not struck thee, or wounded thee, that we can retaliate for thee: thou wouldst indeed play the bravo to thy mistress, and thy plight proves thy courage. But by the past and future, thank the glorious God that he did not leave thee dead on the lake side. By God, he has treated thee nobly; it will be well for thee to abandon such practices, and talk no more to us of Antar. The girls will soon lampoon thee in their songs, and thou wilt be disgraced amongst slaves and chiefs. Ah, woe! woe! grief of griefs! said Amarah, Antar will enjoy those charms, those beauties; and I—this disgraceful situation must ever bespeak my fears. Rebia still abused him; Thy ill stars will not cease, he cried, till thou hast worked our total ruin. Avaunt from before me this instant; let the iniquity of thy acts suffice us. May God curse the father of thy mustachioes! Thus Amarah remained, emancipated by the consequences of his terror, and quitted his brother's presence:

This circumstance with Ibla soon spread abroad, and all the women, and men, and girls, and boys,

and slaves, and slave-girls, joined in the laugh against Amarah, singing these verses, whilst Amarah heard them. The women and shepherdesses sang them at their spindles; for there was a girl among the Absians who could compose verses: she was very eloquent, so she repeated these verses on Amarah the cuckold, and they were recollected by all the women and girls, and they were as follows:

“ Amarah, leave alone the beautiful, full-hipped
“ damsels; let alone all disputes about the lovely
“ girls, for thou canst not plunge into the sea of
“ deaths, and thou art no horseman in the day of
“ battle. Aspire no more to Ibla; if thou dost but
“ look at her, thou wilt see horrors from the lion of
“ the forests. As to the thin quivering spear, touch
“ not its strength, nor the cleaving scimitar. Ibla
“ is a fawn chased by a lion, with eyes that afflict
“ with disorder the stoutest in health. Let alone
“ all contest about her, or the unflinching Antar
“ will make thee drink of death. Thou didst not
“ cease thy obstinacy, till thy foul condition gave
“ evidence against thee. All the girls laughed at
“ thee; thou wert the carrion of the plains and de-
“ serts; thou wert the common talk of the merry,
“ and the laughing-stock for every passenger. Thou
“ camest to us in the robes of dyed silk, thou black
“ greasy kettle! As thou didst meet us, a lion
“ met thee, whom all the lion-heroes acknowledge
“ in the carnage: then fear trembled in thy heart;
“ intoxication quitted thee, and thou wert restored
“ to thy senses. Nothing but contempt remained

“ for thee, when thou didst retire like a dunghill.
“ Ibla beheld thee laid low, stretched out ; and all
“ the beautiful high-hipped damsels with her. We
“ held our noses at thee, as we laughed at thee,
“ and quizzed thee. The Antar of Knights, the
“ lion of the cave came—he, who in generosity is a
“ sea of liberality ; and thou art the vilest of all
“ those that ever crossed a horse—the noblest of
“ those who are tenacious of their lives. We are
“ like the sweetest flowerets ; scented like the violets
“ and the camomile ; and Ibla amongst us is like
“ the branch of the tamarisk : her beauty is the full
“ moon, and the sun of the desert. Thou wouldst
“ possess her by violence and outrage—thou, the
“ vilest of all the dogs that bark. Die in grief,
“ otherwise live in contempt ; for never, never, will
“ there be an end of our lampoons upon thee.”

These verses were soon made public amongst the women and young girls, who used to sing them at their spindles. Amarah and his brothers heard them, and they melted from rage and shame.

About this time arrived a slave from Mootegeredah to Cais, announcing fresh troubles and disasters, and saying, Numan has sent against you his brother Aswad, and with him an innumerable army, among which are the tribe of Aamir, with the Brandisher of Spears, and the tribe of Darem with Locait. Be on your guard also against the tribe of Fazarah, for they are assembling bodily against you, and are preparing to fight you. The cause of this new misfortune was the contemptible Sinan ; for he despatched,

the men he had with him to King Numan, directing them to inform him of what had passed, and the disgrace and indignities he had suffered from the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and that Antar had said, Were Chosroe Nushirvan, or the Emperor of the Worshippers of the Cross to demand Harith, I would not deliver up to any of them even a single hair of his head, till after the contest of swords that blinds the sight, and mangles bodies.

Numan's fury increased, and his two eyes were like fire-balls. As long as this tribe exists in the desert, he cried, I shall have no authority. I shall enjoy no esteem, no consideration with any one. He at the instant summoned Prince Aswad, and told him what had happened, and was preparing, adding, The tribe of Abs is harbouring against me acts of iniquity and perverseness. Harith is now with Antar, and he presumes to protect him against me, and he fears me not, knowing as he does, that Harith slew my child, and has set my heart on fire, and that he also murdered Khalid in my private apartments; it is incumbent on me to tear out every vestige of him, and of the tribe of Abs, were they even to fly from me to the rising of the sun. Know, my brother, said Aswad, much troubled, that as this tribe has committed acts of rapacity against your government, your influence is diminished; and there is no other expedient, but that you unburthen your heart of your enemies, and despatch an army with me to be employed in the establishment of your sacred dignity. Draw forth

all the Arabs from every quarter against them, and let us devastate their whole country.

Numan felt his pains relieved; he ordered out, under his command, an army of twenty thousand horse, and he sent messengers to every Arab tribe to enforce their obedience, ordering them to march in his service. Mootegeredah was much distressed, and was alarmed for the tribe of Abs and her brother; and as Numan had already cast her off, and had renounced all affection for her from the time he had heard of her delivering Harith from his grasp, she sent one of her slaves to her brother to inform him of what was preparing. Aswad is proceeding against you, said she, with twenty thousand warriors, armed with sharp swords and spears, besides the hordes to which messengers are despatched. Aswad exhibited all his active zeal; he felt strong-hearted as to the tribe of Fazarah, and he depended upon them above all. As to King Cais, as soon as the messenger arrived, as we mentioned, and related the march of Prince Aswad, he was greatly alarmed; he summoned the noble Absian Chiefs, and the dreadful Antar, and consulted with them about engaging Prince Aswad. May it be easy on thee, O King, said the Chiefs; we will march with thee, and before thee, and we will not be sparing of our lives for thee: we will meet Aswad, were all that dwell on the waste and the wilds with him. O King, said Harith, it is for those condemned to die that I should weep and lament. I am the object of this wrath. I am he who is the cause of these wars.

But I will instantly write to my tribe of Marah, and I will show thee what I will do with this Aswad and his armies. No, by the faith of an Arab, said Antar, we require not thy aid in this affair. We are sufficient for the whole universe, were I not alarmed for our families at the treachery of the tribe of Fazarah, that they would, during our absence, invade our lands, and capture our families, and plunder our property. But let us instantly proceed against them, and let us scatter them over every wild and plain, or else let us make Hadifah swear he will not be either for us or against us. In such circumstances and calamities, this is the wisest plan; for if the sons of Beder are not fettered down by us, they will occupy our hearts in the hour of battle. When Antar had finished, he cried out, To arms, my cousins! come on to the tribe of Fazarah! retaliate on them! Thus saying, he sprang on the back of Abjer. And when the Abjians heard what he said, and saw what he did, they followed him, and amongst the foremost was King Cais. They set out, resolved on fighting the tribe of Fazarah, amounting to four thousand horsemen, mailed and clothed in armour, undaunted at death, and fearless of defeat.

Hadifah was confounded; he called out to his tribe and his assembled host; they put on their armour and their brilliant corslets, seeking the battle and the combat, life and death being indifferent to them; in number about ten thousand horsemen, headed by Hadifah, an adept in perfidy

and treachery. He was mounted on Ghabra, and in his hand he bore his tall spear; but his heart and mind were on fire, as he thus encouraged his troops:

“ Sons of Beder, if ye do not exert your whole
“ souls in the field of battle with the cleaving sci-
“ mitars, the arrows of infamy will hurl ye down
“ on every side, and ye will become a common tale
“ to the ear. What! can our eyes know rest now
“ my brother Awef is gone? Shall our eyelids
“ swoon in sleep on the couch of ease? We were
“ content with the murder of Malik from the Ab-
“ sians, and copious tears ulcerated their eyes: they
“ have grieved, but they have tortured my heart by
“ the murder of the warrior; and the death of Awef
“ is the severest of pains. O, may I lose the spi-
“ rited horsemen, and may my fingers be unable to
“ move the spear in the hot contest, if I do not
“ leave the land of Abs a desert, and their women
“ captives, deprived of their garments. I will wreak
“ my vengeance on all the tribe of Abs, and no in-
“ tercessor shall avail them.”

The tribes soon came in sight of each other, and they met on a sand-hill called Moreicab. When their eyes encountered, the shouts arose, so that both armies were startled. The Absians cried out, Vengeance! retaliation for Malik! The Fazareans cried out, Retaliation for the slaughtering knight! In the excess of their rage and rancour, there was not one but rushed on and shouted; the horses crushed against each other and neighed—the men

launched forward, and then burst asunder—long lasted the sword-blow—the combat was fierce—misfortune and calamity were at their height—the troops were mingled together—ambition was roused—swords clashed—every drinker was glutted with the wine of agitation—clouds of dust mounted east and west—horrors and wonders were exhibited by the Chief Antar. He succeeded in his wishes against the foe—he overpowered them with the force of a tyrant, never seen in later days—the dead fell singly and in couples—blood gushed from the jugular veins—reproach and pretences were in vain—the universal bray and din grew more terrific among the warriors—what a frightful day! The horses tossed about the skulls of the dead, and the warriors were disgusted with their corslets and mail—the mace and battle-axe laboured among them—every fierce hero roared, and the day was dreadful, as one, who has described it, thus says:

“ The millstones of war revolved in death, and
“ warriors were pounded by them. Heroes were
“ hurled dead on the field, where many knights lay
“ stretched out. Swords cleaved every joint, and
“ spears rent open the bowels. The blow of the
“ battle-axe dashed off the eyebrows, as the arrows
“ tore out the eyeballs. In the scene of car-
“ nage were heard echoes from the blows of the
“ sword edge against the skulls of the combatants.
“ Breast-plates were shivered by the spears, and
“ the pierce of the lance rent through all opposition.
“ In every direction heroes lay dead, felled low in

" every plain. Hands and legs were cut off on op-
 " posite sides, and heads flew off from the branch-
 " tops. The steeds galloped over the plain, whose
 " brave riders were disgraced, hacked to pieces.
 " The eagles of the air hovered over them, pouncing
 " upon them to pluck out their eyes. The coward
 " fled openly, and ran away alarmed at his very
 " imagination. The courageous in war bellowed
 " like wild beasts, and resembled contending lions.
 " The messengers of death prowled about for lives,
 " and separated families from their children. The
 " cup-bearer of death circled every glass to the
 " chieftains that intoxicated them for ever. The
 " swords rang a tune, at which every warrior re-
 " joiced in his glory. Men were dotted about, and
 " rushed promiscuously to the fight. The chargers
 " of the combatants pranced in sport, and charged
 " incessantly over the back of the earth. The
 " dancers started up, and every tribe had recourse
 " to all its manœuvres. Antar, the knight of
 " knights, kindled the hell-fire on the day of the
 " combat of the armed warriors. He rushed upon
 " the foe, and extirpated the chieftains that re-
 " mained as pledges of his victory—he dispersed—
 " he drove them stupefied away, great and noble
 " as they were. He captured the first of their
 " tribes and princes clothed in iron. He protected
 " the chieftains of the race of Abs, who exhibited
 " their martial feats in the field. Every instant he
 " left a foe dead—he every moment defended those
 " he loved. The Chiefs of Adnan were encon-

“raged; they persevered in their exertions and their achievements.”

The battle continued to rage, and the eagles of death to hover over their heads; every spot and place was darkened—man and beast were exhausted by the fall of the spear and the sabre. They persisted in this horrid contest till evening came on, when the two armies separated, the whole country being crammed with the dead. The greatest number were of the tribe of Fazarah, for Antar cut through them, and he relieved his heart amongst them on account of the murder of Prince Malik. He retired towards evening, and the blood was coagulated on his shoulders, like camel's livers. The Absians descended to a retired spot, exulting in the intrepidity of Antar, and what he had done that dusty day, among the Fazareans; and as they counted the dead, they amounted to thirty, all stern-faced warriors. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, in one day then, thirty of us have been slain by the tribe of Fazarah. By the faith of an Arab, to-morrow I will not permit any one to anticipate me in the field, and the theatre of sword-blows and spear-thrusts: I will myself challenge them. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, mayst thou be ever protected from harm; if the Fazareans have slain thirty of us, we have filled the tombs with their dead, who cannot be less than a thousand horsemen and warriors; and to-morrow, by the grace of the Almighty Forgiver, we will entirely crush them. Thus they went to rest, establishing guards round the plain;

till morning dawned, when the troops being drawn up, Antar wished to start into the field of battle. But an Absian, called the Sheikh Makzoom, advanced. O Aboolfawaris, said he, I ask thee; in the name of the two eyes of Ibla, daughter of Malik, to permit me to open the door of the battle, and to relieve my heart amongst the tribe of Fazarah, by the force of my thrust and my blow. Antar was ashamed at his adjuring him, so he said, On then, do what you please, O Sheikh, and should your antagonist refuse to fight, point him out to me, that I may show you wonders: and the Sheikh stood forth between the two lines; he galloped and charged. Come on, O tribe of Fazarah, he cried. On to the contest! ye shepherds, ye who are the slaves and herdsmen of the tribe of Abs. The Sheikh Makhzoom had not finished his speech, when Malik, Hadifah's brother, stood before him. Eh! thou son of a cuckold, said he, when were the Fazareans thy shepherds? and instantly he attacked him. The Sheikh Makhzoom met him, and charged with him for an hour; but fatigue soon falling on his limbs, Malik, son of Beder, shouted at him, and smote him with his sword on the side of the neck, and gave him a dreadful wound. So he wheeled round and fled, his neck bathed in blood, and pursued with hisses from the tribe of Fazarah. Eh! thou contemptible Sheikh, cried Antar, thou foul dog! what did such a coward as thyself mean by adjuring me in the name of the eyes of Ibla, daughter of Malik? By the faith of an Arab, were there not between

thee and me some kindred, I would make thee drink of perdition. He quitted him for the battle, and when he came nigh to the Fazarean ranks, Eh! sons of Beder, he exclaimed, what honour is there in sallying forth against an old Sheikh, whom age has bent double? But there is honour in attacking one like Antar, and in subduing him under the dust; let me wreak my vengeance for my lord; I will show you a scene of battle like sparks of fire, and he thus recited:

“ O sons of Beder, come on to the contest; unsheath before us the sharp scimitar. Ye have acted foully, and treachery shall root out every vestige of ye, and shall orphan your children. Ye have followed Hadifah, and ye think that he knows how to guide ye on the desert course. He has contradicted what his brother asserted, for he thought peace and perfidy were alike. Ye have slain Malik, and he was noble. Ye struck Dahis, and he was of generous blood. Ye have outraged us, and ye claimed the bet. Was that pretension not an act of violence? Ye have acted foully in every deed. All of ye have acted perfidiously—deep are ye in depravity. Behold the sword that destroyed the foul dealer Pharaoh, and before him Themood, and Aad. Now, meet the reward of your deeds, and taste of speedy death.”

Not one of the tribe of Fazarah dared to answer; so he assaulted the right like an eagle: he charged them like an all-powerful lion. Again he challenged, but no one would sally forth against him. He

assaulted the left; he rolled round them, as a revolving millstone, and slew multitudes. He again returned into the open plain. Eh! O sons of Beder, he shouted out, cannot ye ride? Cannot ye fight? Cannot ye speak? And will ye not fly? What! think ye after your treachery to the tribe of Abs, that ye shall escape? Come on—on to the fight; if ye are as ye pretend to be, warriors. It is I who slew your brother Awef; I filled your hearts with terror and dismay. At these words, Hadifah's heart was still more infuriated, and he wished to stand forth; when lo! a knight called Akhtal, son of Sohab, anticipated him; and he was one of the grandees of Fazarah. Eh! thou ordure-born, cried he at Antar, we are come to enjoy the battle; but is there no reason for our declining to contend with thee? Thou canst not know who we are—we cannot combat with a slave, and then presume to seat ourselves among the noble horsemen. As Antar halted to listen to his antagonist, he burst into a loud laugh, and going up to Akhtal, Eh! thou son of a harlot, said he, why art thou ashamed at a black outside, which the Omniscient has created? And thus saying, he rushed at him, and began the contest of thrusts and blows, till, perceiving his adversary give way, he roared at him, in a voice like the thunder in a cloud—it terrified him, and paralysed all his efforts; he smote him under the jaw, and severed his head from his shoulders. The Absians gave a shout of exultation; but the tribe of Fazarah was confounded and stupefied. As Antar continued to gallop and charge, the brother

of the dead started forth, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks. Antar would not permit him even to wheel once, but he thrust at him with the head of his spear, and hurled him off his horse. It was then Hadifah gave a shout, and throwing his helmet off his head, he roared aloud and attacked, followed by the tribe of Fazarah. Antar met them as the parched land the first of the rain. Whatever he smote he dissected—at whomever he thrust, he hurled dead; and when the horse hemmed him in, his roar drove them back on their haunches, and made them hurl their riders off their backs. Seeing what the Fazareans had done, and how foully they had acted by Antar, King Cais shouted to the Absians, and they attacked as he attacked, and they did as he did. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood flowed, and streamed—limbs were hewn off. How many brave men were precipitated from their horses! the day was imperceptible—the heroes roared—the warriors still advanced—the cowards fled—spears were shivered—hearts were rent open—heads were cut in twain—blood gushed out—warriors were slain in troops—and it was a scene of calamities, that staggered the imagination. How many necks were severed! how many old and young were slaughtered! The action continued, till night advancing with obscurity, the two armies desisted from the blow of the sword; and Hadifah alighted. Bewildered as to what he should do, he sent for Sinan to consult. My son, said he, I feared this event; I told you not to fight the Absians till the armies of King

Numan should come. Their arrival is at hand. The Absians will never be subdued as long as this black slave of a cuckold is with them. The best plan for us is, to fortify ourselves in the mountains. If not, to-morrow you must start forth between the two ranks, and challenge Cais and his brothers to the combat, that I may show you what I can effect by art and stratagem. Hadifah acquiesced in this project, and early next day he mounted Ghabra, the cause of all these troubles, and hastened over the plain, galloping and charging, and challenging to the contest, and shouting, O tribe of Abs, know, a tribe should not forsake truth, and he is the best of men who distinguishes justice and follows it. This is an affair that has resulted from the race of Dahis and Ghabra ; and now, O Cais, here are you and I ; between us was the wager. We are the persons who have excited this disturbance among the warriors. Belonging to me and you have been slain persons most dear to us. Let us not permit, O Cais, the women to complain of us ; but let us extinguish the war with our lives ; let us appease our hearts with our swords and the barbs of our spears. King Cais being alarmed, lest he should be blamed and upbraided, left one of his brothers at his post, and with the rest issued forth to the plain. But no sooner saw Antar what the sons of Zoheir were doing, than he advanced towards Cais. O my lord, said he, why do you thus stand forth to the contest whilst your slave Antar is able to answer your foes in your presence ? The man, replied Cais, has com-

plained to me in the name of justice ; and were I not to reply to his demand, the Arabs, far and near, would be scandalized at me. Antar, at these words, retired abashed ; but the sons of Zoheir rushed upon the sons of Beder. Men met men, and heroes heroes ; but the spear-thrust had not commenced against them, when Sinan, accompanied with the Sheiks of the tribe of Fazarah, all bare-headed, came forth. Disgrace to the tribes of Fazarah and Dibyan, they cried, woe to the tribes of Abs and Adnan ! May God be on ye ! O people, may the descent of our grandfathers and progenitors not be cut off ! renounce this outrage—this malice ; ride not over the paths of perverseness and dissension ; haste not to destroy your lives with the sharp swords ; let not your names live amongst posterity for iniquity and sedition ! Sheath then the swords of violence and oppression, for they are still sharper than the sharpest scimitar ; and consider how many warriors heretofore have been destroyed by perfidy. Upon this, they each seized the bridle of a horseman ; they forced him to retire from the spear-thrust and the sword-blow, and compelled them to peace and abandonment of obstinacy. Cais was abashed at their conduct, and acquiesced in their demands, saying, As to your project, I will not thwart it—as to your engagement, I assent to it ; but on a condition, that shall be stipulated on your part, namely : Hadifah shall give us hostages from the children of the grandees of the Fazarah tribe, to remain with us till our dispute with Numan is .

decided, and moreover, he must swear to us, that he will be neither for us nor against us ; for, as our enemies are numerous, and as we have no allies or confederates, we cannot leave in our vicinity persons who may act against us. When Sinan heard this, he felt aware that Cais was an experienced man ; but being sensible too, that if he did not agree to this proposal, his life would be exposed to imminent hazards, he repaired to Hadifah, and explained Cais's proposal. My opinion, he continued, is, that you accept the proposition, otherwise, what havoc will they make among us ! Wait till we find a proper object for the sword, and till we see the means and road to victory ; for King Numan will assuredly root out every vestige of this tribe, and will leave you lords of the highest honours. Thus he brought about a meeting between him and King Cais, and they bound themselves by reciprocal oaths. King Cais then returned home with his horsemen ; as did Sinan and Hadifah also, to the tribe of Fazarah. But at early dawn, they collected the children of the horsemen, about two hundred and fifty of the sons of the chiefs, from the age of five to ten, and sent them to King Cais, who, on their arrival, accommodated them with a separate dwelling on one side of the horde, and whatever they wanted was supplied in abundance, and not sparingly, and the whole tribe was greatly delighted at this arrangement.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN the course of a few days, after this was settled, they received news of Prince Aswad's approach, swearing he would not leave one of the whole tribe of Abs alive. Confound his iniquity! cried King Cais, in great dismay. Alas! Aswad will not leave in our dwellings ten men to grind the wheat and barley, or milk the sheep. He summoned Antar and the chief warriors to his presence, and relating to them what he had heard, he requested their advice. O king, said Harith, may you be protected from every peril! Know that this expedition is on my account: I am the object, and these armies are only advancing in quest of me. On me devolves the duty of encountering them. It is I must patiently endure their chastisements: but to-morrow I will go and meet them; and by the faith of noble Arabs, men of integrity, word, and honour, I will not go against them but with ten men alone. I will encounter this Aswad and his warriors, and I will scatter them right and left. No, said Antar, we will not go but in a body to engage Aswad, and we will fight in thy presence with our well-tried swords till not a breath remains. O great king, added Antar, addressing Cais, what means this waiting for further news? the foe is at hand. March

with us against him, that we may extirpate him, root and branch, before the hoofs of their horses trample down our lands. Upon this, Harith wrote a letter to his brother Cosoorah, telling him to join him with the warriors of the tribe of Marah; and he despatched the letter with one of his own horsemen. As to King Cais, he sent forward a thousand men as the advance of his army, and also commissioned some one to go to the tribe of Ghiftan to demand their assistance in this crisis; and they came with a thousand lion warriors, and Antar's nephew Hatal, whom the king left to protect the women and property.

As to Prince Aswad, he was marching with armies over the desert, when a ferocious lion, of the size of a bull and bigger, crouched among the rocks, appeared before them, roaring and bellowing at the troops: the men retreated from its presence, and the warriors stood still. The troops continued at a halt till Prince Aswad arrived with the rear of the army, and inquired what was the matter? they told him a lion was in front of them. Ye filth, he cried in a violent passion, has all this consternation seized you on account of a lion, the veriest dog of the waste and wilds? How will you encounter men, or contend with heroes in the field of battle? He had not finished his harangue, when a youth, in whom shone the tokens and evidences of intrepidity, started forth against the lion. He was one of the sons of Bekir, son of Wayil: he made towards the lion, having first thrown away his armour and corslet,

till he remained in his plain clothes with short sleeves; he tucked them up to his shoulder, and twisting his skirts round his girdle, he unsheathed his broad sword, and brandished it in his hand, and stalked away towards the lion, his heart harder than a rock of flint; and when he came nigh, he gave a terrific shout, which the lion hearing, he opened his mouth like a grappling iron, and clenched his fangs like a vice, and then collecting himself, as if it were into a third of his real size, he sprang at him like a flash of lightning. As soon as the youth was aware of his intent, he nerved his arm, he strengthened his wrist, and smote the lion with his sword between the eyes; the sword continued to work through till it issued forth between his thighs, and the lion fell cut in twain. The youth returned to his arms, and put on his corslet, when lo! the satraps of Prince Aswad encompassed him, and ordered him to appear in his presence. Amazed at his courage, he inquired his descent and parentage, and who were his Arab connexions? Q prince, said the youth, I am called Jerrah, the Wayilite; and I came to offer my services to you, hearing of your munificence, and that you required the attendance of all the warriors from every tribe: I am at your commands, that I may show you what may gratify your sight. Aswad smiled, and ordered him an honorary robe: he also presented him some generous steeds, but Jerrah refused the robe and horses, at which Aswad being exceedingly moved, Eh! young man, said he, I perceive you refuse my favours and my robe; if

you think the donation small, we will greatly enlarge it. O noble prince, cried Jerrah, kissing the ground, and praying for him, I shall have done nothing in your presence to merit this bounty unless I can hurl at your feet the head of Antar, son of Shedad, in quest of whom these troops are marching. But who is this camel-tender, that you should on his account assemble these armies and warriors? O youth, exclaimed Aswad, vastly gratified, and smiling in joy, if you perform your engagement I will make you a prince to rule over all your Arabs. The youth kissed Aswad's hand and retired. O prince, exclaimed Locait, son of Zararah, this youth has engaged for himself to slay Antar; I engage to kill King Cais and all his brothers. After him came forward the Brandisher of Spears, the knight of the tribe of Aamir, and promised to slay all the families of Zeead and Carad. The joy and the smiles of Prince Aswad were greatly heightened at these words. O noble Arabs, said he, and I too engage myself to you to give fifty dinars to every one who shall bring me a head of those vile Absians.

Thus marched the warriors, promising and expressing their obligations; and they continued travelling over the country and mountains in their way to the land of Abs, till they reached a place called the land of Mesalik, an extensive waste, and fraught with dangers; and when they came nigh to the spot they beheld tents and dwellings, and spears and swords, and horses and chargers. And these were the heroes lying in wait for Prince Aswad;

for King Cais, when he quitted home, having sent on forward the thousand horsemen, marched after them, and he chanced to meet Cosoorah, Harith's brother, on the road, who saluting him and kissing his hand, thanked him for the protection he had granted to his brother Harith. They continued their march till they reached this place, where they had remained three days, and on the fourth came up Prince Aswad and his armies, and beheld the Absians, who had anticipated him. He ordered his troops to halt, saying, Let us send to the Absians a messenger, that we may hear what King Cais has to say for himself: if he delivers up Harith, it is well; otherwise we will attack him with these armies, which are like the tempestuous seas. Accordingly he sent a letter to the Absians by a court messenger, who repaired with it to the Absians, and the first person he met was the Chief Antar, who conducting him to King Cais, snatched the letter from him, and gave it to the King, who opened it, and read it, and it began thus: Know, O Cais, that my brother, whose command is to be obeyed in every quarter, and under whose subjection you have been exalted, thus says, if you wish to accommodate this business, and to be thanked for all your actions, deliver up to him Harith, son of Zalim, and make the excuses of a repentant sinner before your horsemen are obliged to fly. Know also, that this army, with which I am, is only the advance of the grand army, which is following us like the gushing springs. So agree to this proposal, and be not obstinate and re-

fractory, or perils will light upon you. Health to him who obeys and is peaceable, but curses on him who rebels and makes disturbances ! Were this proposal such as we could accept, said Cais to the messenger, it would be well ; but know, O Arab, we are a tribe that having once given their words, follow it up with their actions ; and when we have granted our protection to any one, we secure him against the events of day and night. Now we have engaged ourselves to this man, who retaliated for us on Khalid, son of Giafer, and never can we withhold our protection from him till our heads fly off before him. But say to your prince, whose armies are following him, that this is a point we fear not and dread not. Return to him, and tell him to renounce his rapacity, and not to expose himself to destruction and death ; and let him repent of what he has done. When Antar heard the letter and the answer, he repented of having let the messenger escape in safety ; but the man slunk away, his senses in a state of bewilderment. He knew not what to say till he stood before Aswad, where he shook in terror, and kept looking behind, repeating to him the words he had heard. What's behind thee ? said the prince, thou foul-mustachioed fellow ! wherefore dost thou turn about, right and left ? O prince, said he, behind me is violent death and every figured evil, all comprised in that accursed slave Antar. By the faith of an Arab, O prince, had not King Cais kept him off, he would have destroyed me in the most dreadful of deaths ; and now indeed I

should say that he was close behind me listening to my discourse. Upon this, Aswad smiled from his heart of rage and passion. Verily, folly and rapacity have entered these fellows' brains, he cried; remonstrance has no effect on them, and never will they feel the value of their lives till the chargers play over their heads.

It was now evening; so they reposed that night till day dawned, when the prince mounted at the door of his pavilion; they elevated above his head the banners and ensigns, and the armies and nations rolled on like waves. Prince Aswad had resolved on drawing up his troops in right and left wings, but the rapacious Absians gave him not time, for they had mounted before the rising of the sun, eager for the battle and combat. Amongst the foremost was the Chief Antar, and Harith, who was a blazing flame, with the horsemen of Marah, and his brother Cosoorah. March with me, said Harith to his brother, that we may attack the left; and I, said Antar, will assail the right. They attacked, and their comrades cast their lives into perils and horrors. Upon this, shouted the armies of Irak; and the wilds and the wastes were agitated at their clamour. The Absian army appeared contemptible in their eyes, and their minds assured them of conquest; so they flowed down like the tempestuous seas, and at their head was Locait, like a hovering eagle, with his shouts and his roars; also the Brandisher of Spears attacked with the Aamirites. The convulsion became more furious; the mountains

tottered; the scimitars laboured against backs and kidneys; the doors of the sepulchres were opened, and the decrees of the all-powerful Monarch descended upon them; the clouds of dust mounted on high from the trampling of hoofs; the winners were distinguished from the losers; the portion of the brave was the most abundant. Horsemen rushed upon horsemen; the sword and spear were at work amongst heads and bodies; hands were exhausted; equals contended; heroes and warriors mangled each other; the field was too confined; the intoxicated were sobered; perseverance exerted itself; artifice and fraud availed not. Fierce were the blows of the crossing instruments; the brave were hurled from their saddles. God prospered that memorable day, defending those whose bodies were cased in iron: God prospered Antar and the generous Abians in their slaughter of hundreds and of thousands! As to Harith, he cut through the people and the nations, for he was a man of sorely-wounded spirit; so he fought with the fiercest resolution; he hacked through the armies in his highly roused ardour. But though we have already mentioned his intrepidity, and force, and superiority, nothing could have carried him through those dreadful scenes but his sword Zoolhyyat; and his brother almost equalled him in courage and steadiness; and had it not been for the numbers of the foe not one could have stood firm against him, for how great the difference between the wolf and the sheep, and between foxes and the lions of the forests! Before

midday blood flowed and streamed; heroes complained of calamities and sorrows, and what was before in order was now all in confusion; the form of death was conspicuous, and prowled about; cups were poured out of the wine of death; the sword continued to labour, and blood to gush forth, and men to slay, and the fire of battle to blaze, till evening came on; then had Antar massacred the right with his assaults; he never flagged; and as he retired with his uncles, his sword was drenched in the blood of horsemen, and he had appeased his heart among them in blows and thrusts. Thus also Oorwah, with his firmness and superiority in arms, and the other horsemen. Harith too, with his brother Cosoorah, retired, making their way through the left till they reached the tents. Darkness having thrown its veil over the land, Prince Aswad too retired, but he would not even look at any one, for he had that day seen terrifying horrors; he had beheld warriors who feared not death, and who scorned to yield. When he alighted at his tent, he assembled his people, and reproached them for their combat, exclaiming, This is not the battle by which we shall succeed in our objects; our disorders will not thus be cured. The Absians are less than six thousand men, and we amount to forty thousand strong-limbed warriors; but they have routed our heroes, and particularly that overpowering slave, whom fire cannot effect; he alone discomfited the right, and slew the standard-bearer, and had it not been for the approach of night he would have assaulted me

beneath the banners ; and also that Harith, whom we are come to seek, he alone cut through the left ; and these are circumstances I did not expect. There is that tribe of Fazarah too, on which I depended ; I have no news of them ; I should say, they had forfeited my relationship, as the Absians have forfeited the relationship of my brother. Moreover, if they thus resist us, they will mangle our reputation, and will overthrow our glory ; our heroes will be slaughtered ; our horsemen be scattered over the wilds, and no one will have any respect for us ; and behold, they have not fulfilled their engagements ; those horsemen I mean, who made such fine promises. O dread King, said Locait, be not distressed ; harass not your mind ; to-morrow's night the Absians shall not pass but as your captives. Our projects against Antar and the dastardly Absians must succeed, for the warriors who promised the destruction of the tribe of Abs did not take part in the engagement ; they smote not, neither did they thrust. Conceal your feelings till to-morrow, and you shall see what will gratify your heart ; and when they display their courage in your presence, they will merit your honorary robes and your favours.

At hearing this, the heart of Aswad was consoled, and his passion and fury relented : he dissolved the assembly, and comforted himself. As to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, when they returned to the tents, they searched for the killed and wounded ; the former amounted to fifty-one, and

the latter to a hundred and seventy; but they heard from some one, that of the armies of Irak were slain three thousand and odd: they were delighted, and King Cais feeling sure that he had gained a victory: O my cousins, said he, my heart prompts me, we shall defeat the foe were they even as numerous as the sands of the desert, notwithstanding the slaughter of our horsemen, whose equals the age cannot produce. We form but a small tribe, yet to me one of our horsemen is more valuable than a whole tribe. O King, said Antar, calm your mind and brighten your eye, to-morrow I will exhibit death to them. I am aware they will to-morrow challenge me to the fight. O Aboolfawaris, said Harith, I will not permit you to do any thing of the sort, till I and my brother have drunk of the cup of death. This is a point, said Antar, that can only be decided to-morrow, and every one that is called out by name must start forth to the contest. In this guise they reposed till day dawned, when the armies being in battle array, the first that sought the plain was Jerrah, the Wayilite, for Prince Aswad had ordered his officers to prevent the tribes from attacking in a body. Jerrah charged and galloped over the field of battle, manœuvring upon the back of his swift horse, till the wits of the wisest were confounded; and as he advanced towards the Absians; Tribe of Abs, he cried out in a loud voice, by the faith of an Arab, ye are the horsemen of destruction and instant death; were it not so, ye would not oppose

the kings of the age, ye being so few in numbers. Do ye intend to encounter these armies and warriors? Foul play would proceed from a deficiency in liberality and evil dispositions; but to attack you is the triumph of every noble exertion for one who aims at eminence and honour by the blow of the sword and the thrust of the spear. Let your black knight come forth against me, he, your illustrious warrior, who has raised for you a strong tower of glory. None will reproach his dark complexion, but those who cannot cope with him, those who hate or envy him. I think meanly of every one, notwithstanding his forefathers and progenitors. I acknowledge no honour, but in him who thrusts with the long spear in the scene of action and battle. So send forth against me Antar, that I may exhibit through him a memorable contest; for I have promised to slay him in the presence of Prince Aswad, and to bring down sorrow and misery upon him; and Jerrah thus recited:

“The parentage of the brave is his words and
“his acts, his resolution in the day of encounter,
“and his style of combat. Cowardice renders the
“youth contemptible, although his maternal and
“paternal uncles may be of the race of Hashem.
“Patience in the day of spear-thrusts is the glory
“that will endure, however circumstances may have
“reduced him: not every one that wields a sword
“in his hand, and labours for high honours, attains
“them; but he who plunges into the sea of dust,
“and braves the flame of the raging contest that

“destroys his limbs. So soothe my heart with
“the contest, and approach me, hero, whose
“death is at hand; for ever will I destroy men in
“the fight, and this day shall his limbs be mangled.
“They have a slave indeed, whose deeds are famed,
“whose acts are celebrated in every land. This
“day I will erase his name with my sword, whose
“terror scatters wide the crowded enemies.”

Jerrah had not finished, when Antar stood before him; he roared in his voice like thunder in a cloud, and attacked him. Antar was about to reply to him in some extempore lines, but his thoughts were confused, so he rushed at him. The youth received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. These two fierce heroes turned upon each other like voracious wild beasts, and a combat took place between them that sickened the eyeballs and amazed the stoutest hearts; whilst thick dust arose above them, till it concealed them from the sight. When the Brandisher of Spears saw Antar stand forth against the youth, and occupied in the engagement, he challenged another to the plain, and he was followed by the other ten heroes, who had made high promises in the presence of Aswad, thus taking advantage of Antar's absence. When Harith saw the Brandisher of Spears come forth, with the ten horsemen, imagining they intended to outrage Antar, and being afraid that some peril or accident might befall him, he advanced also, followed by his brother Cosoorah, like a blazing flame. He wielded Zoolhyat in his hand, and cried out to the Brandisher of

Spears, That is a deed of thine, son of Malik, which will be repaid with death ! How darest thou to outrage a man engaged with his antagonist, after he had called him out by his name ? May God curse the entrails that bore thee, and the cuckolds of thy kindred, said the Brandisher of Spears, there is no treachery but what proceeds from thy nature and disposition, and wert thou not in need of the tribe of Abs, thou wouldst have betrayed them even yesterday, but they are not yet secure from thy atrocities. And when thou art slain, thou wilt ever be known to every one that moves and halts by thy infamous deeds : for thou didst kill the Chief of the tribe of Aamir when he was asleep ; thou didst murder Shirjibeel, King Numan's son, quite an infant, and thy evil omen is over the high and low ; but we are come forward to execute our promise, for which we have pledged ourselves.

And he repeated the names of the horsemen. Harith only laughed ; O Gheshm, said he, this engagement proves thy little wit ; for I do not see that thou hast promised to slay me, knowing as thou dost, that I am his greatest enemy ; and it was in the private apartments of his brother that I slew Khalid, son of Giafer ; and I slew also his son Shirjibeel ; but I do not know whether thou hast omitted to engage to kill me through fear of me, or out of contempt for me. Know, O Harith, said the Brandisher of Spears, thou didst not occur to the mind of any one, for we did not suppose that thou wert with the Absians ; but we thought that thou wert

returned to thy desolation amongst the mountain-tops. Thou art right, replied Harith, and thou hast not advanced but what is perfectly true. But I intend this day to dye my sword in your blood, and to destroy ye all, high and low, and to avert your vexations from the tribe of Abs.

And he rushed upon the Brandisher of Spears, and Cosoorah assailed the Aamirite horsemen. The Semherian spears were extended; the dust sprang up from the hoofs of the Arab steeds, and calamities fell upon them. Antar bellowed at the horses to drive them far from the contest; he made an assault at the Brandisher of Spears, with the rush of an illustrious warrior. He grasped the rings of his corslet and breast-plate, and taking him prisoner, threw him down to Shiboob, who bound down his arms, and tied fast his shoulders.

The battle continued to rage, and blood to flow, and the flame of war to burn, till evening came on, when the armies quitted the contest. Antar had made about two hundred prisoners that day, whom Shiboob pinioned one after another, but those that resisted him he slew.

When Prince Aswad alighted at his tent, behold, a black, tall, lanky slave presented himself. He had every appearance of having performed a long journey, and travelled in haste; he kissed the earth, and did obeisance. Who art thou, Arab born? asked Aswad. My lord, said he, I am one of the slaves of Hadifah, Chief of the tribe of Fazarah: he has sent me to you to congratulate you on what he has done

to your enemy the tribe of Abs, and the miseries and woes he has brought down upon them; for after their expedition against you, he surprised the dwellings, with the warriors of Fazarah. He plundered their property, and slew their men, and captured their women; and by to-morrow's dawn he will join you. He has sent me to you with this message: disperse in separate divisions your army now surrounding the Absians, that they may not fly elsewhere; for he is afraid of the escape of Antar and Harith, who hereafter may still occasion us fresh trouble. Thus may success attend us!

The Prince jumped up, and stood erect in the fulness of the joy he felt; but never was this incident forgotten by him. He ordered his men to draw off the horsemen from the tribe of Abs and Adnan on all four sides, into the wilds and wastes, and in less than an hour they were scattered over the desert, and he himself mounted with those that remained about him, and marched on till he came nigh unto the tents of the Absians, where he concealed himself. Return, O Arab born, to thy master, said he to the slave-messenger, and tell him we have obeyed his directions.

Now the slave who concerted that plan, and dispersed the armies of Aswad over the barren waste, was the lion Shiboob. For when the troops alighted in the tents, O my cousins, said King Cais, my opinion is we should surprise Aswad's army under the night; perhaps we may disperse his army over the desert and waste. Shiboob was present in at-

tendance on his brother Antar : O my brother, said he, if you will hear what I have to say, I will most certainly disperse the armies, mighty and extensive as they are, and you shall catch Aswad himself in his own pit, and defeat his troops and armies. May God bless thee, O Shiboob ! cried the Absian chiefs, if thou canst effect such an enterprise.

At the moment, Shiboob sprang forth to his portmanteau, and putting on some clothes suitable to stratagem, he ran away, and in an hour returned and told his brother and King Cais what he had done. Now surprise Aswad, said he ; he is now in such a particular spot, and has only a small party with him.

King Cais ordered them to prepare the warlike instruments, and before midnight they were on horseback. King Cais sent for Harith, and attached to him one thousand men, and sent him to the left. As to Oorwah, he stationed him with one thousand men to the right : Do you, said he to Antar, assault the centre, my cousin. The King himself mounted with the remainder of the warriors, accompanied by Antar's nephew, with whom he brought up the rear. As to Aswad, he had concealed himself with his men, and dispersed his troops, and every one dismounted and slept near him. Suddenly screams came upon them, and the blow of the murderous scimitars, and the thrust of the calamitous spears surprised them. The armies were aghast, and their senses were disordered. Every one started from his sleep and drew his sword ; every one fell upon him

who was before him. Bewildered by sleep, and terrified at the dreadful Antar and the noble Absians, they attacked each other with the edge of the sword, but they knew not whom to address, or whom to strike. Base cowards! cried out Antar at the head of the Absians, I am Antar, son of Shedad. No sooner did they hear the voice of Antar, the dauntless hero, than despair, and misery, and woe fell upon them; brave warriors were slain in the very spots where they fought, till every horseman thought wherever he turned, there was the voice of the lion Antar.

Aswad withdrew his troops; they not only withdrew, but dispersed in confusion over the waste. His only resource was to wheel about and fly, but he had not proceeded far, when Oorwah and his men encountered him, and surrounding him, were about to kill him, but he cried out for quarter, discovering himself to them, and demanding protection; on which they made him dismount from the back of his horse, and took him prisoner, dragging him along abject and miserable.

The contest continued to rage, and blood to be spilt, and the flame of war to blaze, till Shiboob, seeing how easy the business had become, mounted to the top of a sand-hill, and making himself as one of Aswad's followers, cried out with a loud voice, O Absians, grant us quarter and protection; withdraw from us the blow of the sword: no one but Aswad forced us against ye, and him ye have taken prisoner. Let us retire; relieve us from this fear

and tribulation. On hearing these words, Aswad's troops dispersed among the wastes; and there was not one who looked at another whilst Antar and Harith pursued them, till they had cleared the whole country of them, when they returned to the scattered horses and dispersed arms: and having collected the tents and property, they halted, exulting in their victory and conquest.

The next day they assembled the prisoners, amongst whom were Locait, and the Brandisher of Spears—in all, about fifty of the most celebrated Arab leaders, and their most renowned knights, with whom they set out on their return home, rejoicing in the defeat of the enemy, and their dispersion over the wilderness.

They travelled on till the following morning, and about mid-day there appeared some of their own friends, advancing from the direction of their country, and hastening over the plain in the most miserable plight, their ears cut off, their bodies besmeared with blood, and shrieking out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! haste to us, and retaliate! till they came into the presence of King Cais. Know, O King, said they, that Hadifah, after your departure, surprised us one day with five thousand horse; he not only slew our men, plundered our property, and rescued the hostages that were with us, but he massacred four hundred youths of our children, from the age of five to ten, whom he dragged forward one after the other, as he cried out to them, Now call out for some one to rescue you from death! and

then made each in turn a mark for his arrow. He captured our women and our families, and is now gone to his own country. The cause of this was Hadifah's wife, who, observing her husband slack in the cause of retaliation, one day appeared before him, when he was seated with the chiefs of Fazarah. She was bare-headed, and her hair dishevelled. Son of Bedr, she cried, restore me to my family and my native land, for I want no coward husband; and she thus recited:

“ May the curse of God light on the coward !
 “ May he never give thee to drink of the moisture
 “ of rain; may the rain-clouds never extend their
 “ bounty to the lands of his tribe ! may they never
 “ robe his deserts in verdure ! Thou hast clothed
 “ thyself, son of Bedr, in garments of infamy, that
 “ can never change their ignominious effect; and
 “ were it not for this disgrace, my eyelids would
 “ be ulcered with tears. Cais has involved us in
 “ woe for a youth; were they to weigh all Abs
 “ against him, he would equal them. He has
 “ moreover slain the Chieftains of Bedr, and has
 “ made the Semherian spears drink of their blood.
 “ Never, never, will my tears cease; my sorrows,
 “ my afflictions, are endless. How many miserable
 “ women like me, in the tribe, are mourning in woe !
 “ Rise then, seek the land of thy enemy; fear not—
 “ their defender is absent—leave not one alive among
 “ them, and let not their screams keep thee away from
 “ them. The Absians have indeed spilt your blood;
 “ so drive away their camels, and capture their

“wives; for your blood is noble, and generous, and high-priced to those that purchase it. But ye, sons of Bedr, my cousins, ye are brave, the most illustrious of men; be therefore like the progenitors that are gone, the forefathers that are passed away, and let their glory live for ever.”

These verses were called the “Exciters of Sorrow.” When Hadifah heard his wife’s address, To arms! to arms! my cousins, he cried, and before midday, he was surrounded by five thousand well-armed horsemen. Hadifah mounted Ghabra, and the horsemen followed him. The Sheikhs endeavoured to prevent this treachery and perjury; but said Sinan, What is this? How? The Absians are absent, the women have no protector—no one to defend them, and this tribe are in duty bound to wreak their vengeance. What greater advantage can accrue from such oaths? Thus Hadifah, and the tribe of Fazarah, travelled on till they reached the tribe of Abs and Adnan, whom they attacked on all sides, and when the Ghiftanians saw what the Fazareans were doing, they plunged themselves into corslets and breastplates, consisting, as we mentioned, of two thousand men, all harsh-featured lions: they fought that day, and the next, even till the fourth day, when the tribe of Ghiftan being routed, Hadifah, with his Fazareans, gained possession of the Absian tents, and their property, and their daughters, and their children, and having rescued their hostages, they massacred four hundred children of

the tribe of Abs, all boys, from five to ten years old, making them marks for their arrows. As he returned home, his wife met him, and she beat the Absian women with a whip, and abused them, thus relieving her own heart. Hadifah put all the property apart, saying to his surrounding warriors, We must not divide this property yet, till we see what Aswad will do to the tribe of Abs. But Hadifah had scarcely finished this sentence, when lo ! a dust obscured the land, and when it cleared, there came forth the warriors of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and Antar at their head, like a furious lion. The cause of their coming was the men whom they met, as we mentioned, who told them what Hadifah had done. The Absians screamed, in agony of woe and distress, for the men and children that had been massacred. King Cais assembled the prisoners, and delivered them over to Harith, saying, These are thy enemies: take them, and precede us to our country, whilst we march against the tribe of Fazarah, for thou canst not fight Hadifah, on account of your relationship. So he sent with him a party of Absians, and took the remainder with him, and departed, a flame burning in his heart, and he thus addressed them :

“ Prepare, ye heroes, implements of war; this
“ point can only be settled with arms; your little
“ ones have been massacred—it is a disgrace upon ye;
“ but it is unavoidable. Hadifah ! mayst thou never
“ drink a drop of liquid ! may the rains of the desert
“ never moisten thee ! thou hast indeed made a war

“ against us that would choke a Sheikh, as if with
“ poisoned water. But I am now mounted on a
“ steed, that surpasses the lightning and the winds
“ in speed, one hindfoot white, black-haired, broad-
“ faced, whose forehead resembles the first burst of
“ dawn. O my cousins, all my joys are crushed on
“ your account, whilst you groan in pain of wounds.
“ As to my life, I regard it not, when the thick tears
“ of grief stream down my cheeks. Behind me are
“ chiefs of the race of Abs, waving long spears in
“ their hands—warriors irresistible—generous—in
“ the exposure of their lives they flinch not. Come
“ on then! shed the blood of the sons of Beder, with
“ the cleaving scimitar.”

As soon as Cais had finished, pride rushed like a blast into their heads; they hastened on, till they came nigh to the tribe of Fazarah, who no sooner ascertained they were Absians, than they were confounded and bewildered. Now then, my cousins, cried Hadifah, come on, here is your hated foe. Spring upon them in the contest, otherwise they will exterminate ye—they will ravage your property, and capture your wives. Men soon met men, and warriors warriors—blood flowed and streamed—limbs were hewn off—horrible were the scenes of peril; the convulsions were tremendous—men were precipitated on the plain of battle. King Cais attacked in person, and made the carnage rage against his kindred. Hands were extended to grasp the objects of their wishes, but did not all succeed. Calamities smote the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, whilst King

Cais exclaimed, Cousins, whomsoever the hand touches, slay not; let us deliver them all to the mothers of the children, whom Hadifah killed with his arrows. At that time, above four hundred of the Fazareans had been already slain on the field of battle; but when they heard this harangue, the Absians only exerted themselves to take prisoners. Antar on that day performed achievements to be recorded, on account of the murder of his friend Malik. At last, the Absians forced the Fazareans into their tents; there they slaughtered about a thousand horsemen, and took five hundred more, rescuing their own wives, and all their property, and they returned, exulting in having retaliated. But when they were settled, King Cais delivered to the mothers of the children four hundred prisoners, taking for himself one hundred to murder, in retaliation for his own son; and he directed all the women, each to repair to her prisoner, and to torture him the whole night; and, in the morning, to drag him forth between the hostile ranks, and murder him, in retaliation for her child. Each took charge of her respective prisoner, and she passed the night inflicting the severest torments, till the crow cawed. As to the tribe of Fazarah, they retired to their tents, repenting of what they had done. Hadifah alighted, gnawing his hands in contrition, as he said to his brothers, I have no other anguish in my heart, but in not having succeeded against the Absians. To-morrow will I start forth to the contest, and I will appease my whole heart among them. I will suc-

ceed in my hopes, or I will drink of the cup of death and perdition. Then he wept, and his brothers too wept; and as he wept, What mean these tears and alarms? said Sinan; soon will come the armies of King Numan, who will extirpate the tribe of Abs. And know, O Hadifah, the Absians have only fought with such fury, on account of your massacre of their children, and your plunder of their property, and the capture of their wives and families. Fortune consists of two days. As to the prisoners, redeem them with cattle, or by war and battle. O Sinan, said Hadifah, as to the prisoners, not one will be released, but after a contest that will turn infants gray, and frighten the stoutest warriors; if indeed they escape beheading to-morrow. But I should now like to know what has happened between the Absians and Prince Aswad. He immediately sent for one of the prisoners he had that day taken, and to his inquiries, the Absian told him how Aswad and fifty chiefs had been captured, and that they were sent home with Harith. Hadifah shuddered, and was stupefied. Disgraced are the Arab chiefs, by the violence of this black slave, whose obstinacy and fury are incontrollable, exclaimed Hadifah, and by the outrages of that treacherous tribe of Abs. Now then, the destruction of the tribe of Fazarah is at hand. And they remained in this state till, as the day dawned, the two armies mounted, and the armour and brilliant mail glittered. King Cais mounted beneath the banners and standards, and ordered the women to appear, who came,

each dragging her prisoner by the chin. He commanded them to slay them, and thus to wreak their vengeance. Immediately every woman led out her captive in front of the two armies; she made him lie down between the two ranks, and slaughtered him, cutting him across the jugular vein, like the slaughter of a sheep, whilst her husband assisted her in the deed; and when all the four hundred warriors were massacred, King Cais ordered his slaves to murder the hundred warriors, in retaliation for his own son. Hadifah and the chieftains of Fazarah were on horseback, viewing the fate of their cousins. Their affliction was intense, and there was not one but dismounted from his horse, and taking off his rustic clog from his feet, dashed it down on his head, till he shook out all his double teeth. The news reached the wives of the murdered, and they rushed out, overwhelmed with anguish. Upon that, the tribe of Fazarah brandished their spears and their swords. The Absians received them on the barbs of their long lances, and cut through them with their polished scimitars. It was a day to frighten the senses—lives were dearly sold—evening and morning appeared the same—shouts were raised on high—the morrow and the dawn were annihilated. Lives were plundered from bodies, and the resolute warrior cried out, Flinch not from the battle and the contest! All was exertion—no jest. The Absians made one universal shout, What a glorious morn! The Fazareans stood firm with their bold countenances. How many heroes fled from the fight and

sought the wilds and the waste ! blood streamed and flowed—the whole army was covered with wounds, and between them lasted an action whose like had never occurred at that period, and amongst the many descriptions of it are the following lines :

“ I have braved fortune, experienced and wise.
“ I have endured calamities all my life long, but
“ never saw I so hostile a day. I never felt from
“ any one a severer misfortune than that Absian
“ contest, when they assaulted the sons of Beder.
“ The tribes were exterminated on that terrific day,
“ that might be considered as a thousand months of
“ time. I saw the cloud of their dust, and the
“ gleaming flash of their swords and spears. How
“ many heroes I beheld prostrate, struggling with
“ their feet as the horses passed over them ! How
“ many youths I heard beneath the black columns
“ of sand, uttering groans that bewildered my facul-
“ ties ! But had it not been for the Absian slave, who
“ encountered the Fazarean troops in every direc-
“ tion, who destroyed the heroes with the Redeinian
“ spear, as the horses of the sons of Beder rushed
“ upon him, and slaughtered the enemy with the
“ sabres, with a heart cut out of the solid rock !—
“ God prospered the noble slave, who overthrew a
“ thousand freeborn in the combat, and when he
“ wielded his sword in the day of battle, the heroes
“ might be seen tumbling down before him.”

At the close of the day, the two parties alighted at their respective tents. King Cais then consulted with Antar, about sending the property and families

to the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi. Do as you please, O king, said Antar. Accordingly, he gave them an escort of one hundred horsemen, under his brother Harith. Conduct your mother, said he, and the rest of the women home, and remain with Harith, son of Zalim, for I will not quit the tribe of Fazarah till I extirpate every vestige of them, and leave no record of them. Antar, indeed, had resolved to take charge of them, but King Cais would not permit him; so he remained behind, that he might incur no blame or reproach; and Harith departed with the property and families. As to the Fazareans, they halted at their tents, and more than a third of them had been slain. What say you? said Sinan to Hadifah, shall I go to your brother-in-law, Harith, son of Zalim, and throw myself on his mercy? Perhaps he will now fight for us, or, at any rate, make peace for us. No, that will not do, said Hadifah. They continued in conversation till, the darkness having disappeared, Hadifah descended into the plain, and as he came nigh to the standards of King Cais, O son of Zoheir, he cried, the wager was between thee and me. The affair indeed is gone too far, and we have put on the garments of treachery and outrage, for thou hast slain my son, and thy slave slew my brother; I slew thy brother, and it was I who ordered the blow against thy horse. The other day I slew the infants, and you, in their stead, have slain as many men. It is not liberal, that we should permit the women to complain of us; but let us terminate this affair with our

lives, till one of us be dead : thus will all anxiety and doubt be at an end ; one of us will succeed, and let the survivor reign over the whole land. Come on then, I will attack thee, and never will I desist till thou hast destroyed me, or I have destroyed thee ; and Hadifah thus recited :

“ Fortune disregards all respect and engagement ;
“ oft-times she cajoles us and favours the coward.
“ In our fathers we are glorified, and from our fore-
“ fathers we are made heirs to glory and supremacy.
“ I have built a mansion of glory, sublime on high,
“ with spears that make no distinction between
“ sacred and profane ; with swords with which we
“ encounter horrors and the calamities of the age.
“ At all times the cleaving sword is my protection ;
“ the sword whose edge fractures bones. I have
“ granted wealth to the poor, and never withheld
“ it, and never have I heard reproach. I have par-
“ doned where I have been able ; in my decisions
“ I have been impartial ; I have never broken my
“ engagements. But I know fortune is a niggard ;
“ its disposition is perfidious, and it owns no no-
“ bility. If joy has its day, and should it even last
“ awhile, the hand of misfortune will turn it into
“ sorrow for a year. So be impartial to me in the
“ combat ; charge ; behold my resolution when the
“ battle rages, for we have left the women wild with
“ grief, dashing their hands against their cheeks and
“ sleepless.”

When King Cais and his brothers heard these verses, they were afraid the Arabs would regard

them with the eye of inferiority; so King Cais started forth, mounted on the back of his horse, and thus spoke:

“If thou art in want of compassion, I will confess on some occasions I travel in the paths of weakness. I have a steed for mercy bitted with mercy, and I have a horse for folly saddled with folly. With him who challenges my resolution I am straight; and for him who would make me swerve aside I am crooked. Thou hast outraged us, son of Beder; and the deed by which thou hadst conquered is more odious than all that is most vile; taste, then, the chastisement of violence before thou drinkest of the cup of death that is impregnated with poison. I have taken captive him whose aid ye required. I have returned with him, and the flame of war increases, and is kindled anew. We are all lion horsemen, all brave heroes crowned with glory.”

King Cais rushed upon Hadifah, who met him as the parched earth the first of the rain, both expressing the deep resentment rankling in their hearts. In less than an hour they both vanished from the sight, and the dust thickened over them. There was not one in the two armies but prepared for the combat, fearful lest death should overtake their leaders. Hadifah, before he attacked King Cais, had already enjoined his brothers, saying, When you see me drawing King Cais towards you, rush at him and slay him, and let the Arabs abuse us to eternity. He thus purposely kept retiring till

he came close to his brothers, who immediately attacked, and attempted to put Cais to death. But when Antar saw this treason on the part of the Fazareans, he assailed them, shouting at them in a voice like thunder in a cloud, and they instantly retreated from the scene of action. Antar advanced, and thus exclaimed:

“ I am the son of Shedad, truly the knight of the
“ Arabs, and the reliever of grievances with the
“ sharp edge of my sword. The atmosphere is
“ dust-darkened; the whole region is obscured in
“ sand-clouds; the light of the sun is veiled; the
“ dust-wave is on high; warriors charge and ap-
“ proach the scene where death will be quaffed; the
“ horses neigh, and the horsemen charge, and the
“ earth is convulsed at the excess of horrors; it is
“ a day to turn every hero old, and no one braves
“ it but the valiant. I have stood firm in it with a
“ heart that knows no tardiness; conscious of no
“ fear or alarm. I have plunged into it, and the
“ dust of death pours over my noble steed, ambling
“ as he goes. Every eye beholds me and is bewil-
“ dered; they approach me, and they are repaid with
“ death. There is no virtue in the act where death
“ is not at hand, nor is there any exaltation of soul
“ to be recorded in history. My parentage is
“ known amongst the noblest of the creation, for
“ my resolution, my vigilance, my virtues, and my
“ superiority.”

Having finished, he rushed upon the tribe of Fazarah; he put them to confusion; he cleft down

their horsemen, singly and in pairs, till he came up to King Cais and Hadifah, whom he saw clinging to each other like one individual; he rushed at them, and dispersing those that surrounded them, he thrust at Hadifah with his spear, and hurled him from the back of his horse on the ground, and brought forth King Cais from the battle, whilst the Absians turned upon the Fazareans, and let down infamy and ruin upon them. They took four hundred prisoners, and two of Hadifah's brothers; and they continued this cruel work till evening came on, when they retired to their tents. As soon as darkness had veiled the earth, behold, three horsemen arrived out of the hundred whom King Cais had sent with Harith, son of Zalim, to guard the prisoners.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EH! what has befallen you? said Cais; who among men has cast you down? Know, O king, they replied, we accompanied Harith till we reached our own country. Harith guarded the prisoners, and remained watching them three days, ever menacing them till night-fall; but one morning we looked for him and his prisoners, but we could not find either him or them; so out of our alarms for you, knowing well his perfidy, we are come to apprise you. Cais shuddered at this intelligence; And did this event, asked he, take place before the families arrived, or afterwards? No women, no families, no camels; no cattle, have we seen, replied they. Then the light became dark in the eyes of King Cais. Alas! then our advantages have turned out to our prejudice, he exclaimed, and these ordures of Fazareans will still exult over us. O king, said Antar, when he saw the anguish of Cais at this corroboration of the news, this fact proves indeed the difference between appearances and reality, as widely distinct are they as existence from annihilation; an experienced man can see the whole proceeding from beginning to end. I am persuaded that Aswad and his companions have ultimately engaged to procure King Numan's protection for him, and that he has agreed to their plans,

and has consequently released them from bondage ; and as he was coming with them against us, he must have met our women travelling along the road (no better opportunity to open a door to the heart of King Numan could they find), they must have seized them, and they are now on their way to Hirah. King Cais was convinced of the probability of Antar's conjectures ; O my cousin, said he, if it is so, truly we are fallen between two perilous catastrophes, and two deadly afflictions, and I do not comprehend which we should undertake first ; for if we pursue Harith in a body the Fazareans will turn upon us, and if we remain here every vestige of us will be extirpated. O king, said Antar, it is my opinion that I go alone after Harith and his prisoners ; I will rescue the property and families ; I will replace Aswad himself and his comrades into chains and fetters ; and I will show you what I will do with that Prince Aswad and all his people. Do you in the meanwhile stand firmly opposed to the tribe of Fazarah. Ah, my cousin, said Cais, much relieved, do as you please ; but if it is so, and you really must go, take with you some one to aid you in the contest. O king, said Antar, if my heart were easy about you, I would attack every human being on the earth single-handed. But he took his nephew Hatal, and altogether ten men, on whose firmness he could rely in battle. Shiboob by his side, he sought the barren waste, followed by his warriors.

As to the tribe of Fazarah, after Hadifah and his

brothers were taken prisoners, they took to a precipitate flight, and repaired to Sinan, who exhorted them to resist till the morrow, as something would probably happen to occupy the Absians' attention. The next day there started forth from the Fazareans a sturdy warrior and an intrepid hero; he was a horseman of the dimensions of an elephant, or a towering palm-tree; he galloped, and charged, and challenging to the fight, thus exclaimed, O tribe of Abs, come forth to the spear-thrust and the sword-blow. By the faith of an Arab ye are the knights of the age, the lions of Adnan, the conquerors of the brave, and truly ye are just; on this account the God of the holy shrine has aided you, and has humbled your foes to you. We, moreover, have outraged you, and we have oppressed you, and we had no propriety in our transactions. Such indeed have been our proceedings: but you have slain our horsemen; you have hurled dead our brave heroes; and all this has fallen upon us in consequence of our massacre of your children, and our perfidious conduct towards you; and, moreover, our warriors were taken captives by you, and their outrage has been visited upon them in the result of their infamous conduct and disgraceful actions. We were last night resolved on flight, though we are more numerous than you, and our means more abundant, but ye are more steady than us in the field of combats and contests. Now, then, all we demand of you is justice, and the abandonment of all violence and outrage, so that when you accomplish your de-

signs upon us, and possess yourselves of our property and women, our families and our wives may not have a word or a syllable to say against you, and no blame or reproach be attached to you. Come forth, then, against me, ye that desire the combat, for ye are the chiefs of Adnan, and the warriors of Hijaz. Beware of treachery, ye heroes, or the calamities nocturnal and diurnal will overwhelm ye. After this harangue the knight thus continued:

“Whoso has tried fortune, him its marvels have terrified; into him its misfortunes have fixed their fangs. I truly know that the results of violence are repentance, and that its consequences will requite us. There is nothing remaining for us but to drink of the cup of death under the dust-cloud when the whole country is blackened. Cool then my sickness with the spear-thrust; rush then upon a brave man, to whom every thing is easy. Shame has pitched her abode on him from every direction, though once the revolutions of fortune were his friends. Ye judges, be impartial towards us, for we have a land whose female mourners shriek in terror. Perhaps too the revolutions of fortune will befriend us with its justice, and will send down its evils upon you. Confide not in fortune, for the age is fraught with evil; and sorrow, as you see, may inflict its wondrous works on you.”

King Cais listened, and was exceedingly astonished at the mild tone of the warrior: his heart pitied the tribe of Fazarah, as he recollected the re-

lationship and kindred that existed between them. By the faith of an Arab, said he to those around him, were this knight anxious to make peace with us I would be reconciled to them, and forgive the blood of the children on account of the tenderness of his expressions. But it is too late: so now come on. And as to this knight who demands fair play, let him have it; and if any one of ye is able to take him prisoner, let him capture him. Upon that, the Absian warriors rushed upon him from all quarters, and although King Cais called out to them, they would not return; for their ambitious feelings were excited against that knight, who, when he saw the Absian forces making towards him, smiled conceitedly; and as he joyfully urged on his horse, Eh! Absians, he exclaimed, ye have not failed in this instance of impartiality; but this is what the strong ever do against the weak, and as he spoke he bent his head over the saddle-bow; he assaulted the Absians, and met them with dreadful sword-blows and powerful spear-thrusts. Wreaking his vengeance upon them, he cut through them with his sword, and in less than an hour he hurled down twenty of their most puissant knights. The horsemen still assailed him in every direction, and shouted at him; but he was silent and returned no answer, neither did he make any address, but he dealt his blows right and left, cleaving down the horsemen on the field of battle. The tribes stared at him and at the plain, in order to distinguish the vanquished from the vanquisher, but of that lion-hero they could only

discern the sword-blade as it glittered, and where it fell it cleft in twain, till all the warriors fled from him, and sought safety in the presence of King Cais, who eagerly asked them what that knight had done to them. On our lives, O king, they exclaimed, we never saw a more valiant fellow than this hero; he has cut down our horsemen with his scimitar, and has brought death upon us. Well, said Cais, and what is this hero's name? who is this lion? O king, we know him not, they replied; there is not one of us that can give any account of him, for never did we behold his like amongst all the warriors, or one that could equal him in the field of battle: he has already slain twenty horsemen, all lion heroes. The heart of Cais was sorely grieved; and as he listened to the acclamations of the tribe of Fazarah, his rage and anguish were more intolerable; for he felt assured those shouts were the shouts of victory. His grief and sorrow pressed heavier upon him, and he ordered his brothers and the horsemen of his tribe to make a united attack, saying, Come on to the knight who softened us to pity by his speech, and who destroys our horsemen with the edge of his scimitar. Upon this, the Absian heroes rushed upon him; they slackened their reins, and poised their spears; but they had not approached the field of contest before the enemy appeared, and the youth started forth in their rear, roaring and bellowing like thunder in a cloud, and blood was trickling from his sword edge, and death was glaring in his eyes.

The horsemen shuddered and shrunk back, whilst the Knight continued to cleave skulls, and to crush bones, till coming near the banners and standards of the King, he roared O by Marah ! O by Marah ! Hail, O Cais, to thy death and destruction ! I am Harith, son of Zalim, the slayer of lion-warriors. And he rushed at the standard-bearer, and smote him on the head with his sword, and divided him down to the girdle of his back, and felled him cut in twain. He assaulted King Cais, and dragging him off his horse's back, took him prisoner, and delivering him over to one of his attendants, he renewed his attack.

The Fazareans rushed on to his assistance, their hearts encouraged by his intrepidity; men met men, and heroes met heroes : blood flowed and streamed ; limbs were hewn asunder ; warriors were stretched low upon the field of contention ; the well-proportioned spears, and the cleaving blades, laboured amongst them. Heads flew off ; wrists were severed ; the eagles of death hovered over them. The warriors crowded round King Cais and Harith, and the market of war continued its traffic. This one died, that one escaped ; the scimitars flashed ; the spears stung ; mails were split ; lives were in agony ; the ground was drenched in blood ; the glories of the heroes were exalted ; the flame of war increased, and numberless were the sword-blows and the spear-thrusts ; the easy became arduous, and the whole scene boiled like the bubbling of a caldron. Eagles and vultures hovered over them ; the coward was overthrown, and the brave vanquished. Men en-

gaged, and the horrors became still more terrific, till the day departed, and night came on in obscurity, when the two armies separating, alighted in a neighbouring spot.

The Fazareans carried off King Cais, intending to ransom Hadifah with him, and to obtain through him security after all their terrors. The cause of this was, that after King Cais had delivered over the prisoners to Harith, with an escort of one hundred men, he conducted them to the land of the Absians, where he beheld the carcasses of the dead, and the streaming of blood. The Absians cannot stand out long, said he to himself: so he pitched his tents on the sand-hills and mounds, and remained guarding the prisoners till the third day, when he went unto them, and found them consulting about the deliverance of their persons. O Harith, said Aswad, how trifling is your compliance with the times; how strange is your conduct among the horsemen! just as if thou wert only created a rock, cast down on the plain for every one to stumble against thee. What can I do? he replied: I am the horseman of horsemen and heroes. O Harith, said Locait, the cause of these disasters was your murder of Numan's son; and though you contrived to escape after all your dangers, you have persisted in your obstinacy and rebellion, and have reconciled yourself to a life with an insignificant, worthless slave; but if you have a mind to rescue Numan's brother and his companions, and to make your apologies, and demand their protection, haste then before it is too late, and

repent not of what is past, only when misfortunes befall you—so that we may engage Numan's protection for you, and your former deeds be cancelled by your subsequent conduct, and every man alive will thank you. But the Absians, said Harith, it does not become me to afflict them—but then Antar! Ah! indeed, against him my heart is sick with envy: no man's frame is more disordered than mine; for he is superior in feats of arms and horsemanship; were it not so, the Arabs would be under my control; and had I not been in want of him, I would have murdered him, and would have captured his cousin Ibla.

Prince Aswad now began to indulge hopes of success. What is it you wish? said he, that we may grant it, and engage for its fulfilment? I wish you would go with me, said Harith, to the tribe of Fazarah, and assist me in the destruction of Antar, and insure me Numan's protection. O Harith, exclaimed Aswad, who only required his liberty and return to Irak, I engage for Antar's death, were he encompassed by multitudes.

Upon this, Harith released them from bondage, and brought them arms and horses, and only waiting for the darkness of night, they set out for the land of Fazarah; and as they met the wives, and property, and families of the Absians on the road, My opinion, said Aswad, is, you should drive away these baggage-camels, and depart for King Numan before the dread Antar pursue us, and return us to captivity and infamy.

So they surrounded the baggage-camels on all

sides, and ordered the people to turn them towards the land of Irak. Who is it, said Harith, son of Zoheir, who has sent you against us? Surrender! exclaimed the Brandisher of Spears, or I will make thee dwell in thy tomb. We are the horsemen of Aamir, and with us is Harith, son of Zalim, and Prince Aswad, brother of King Numan. Thus saying, he attacked Harith, son of King Zoheir, and took him prisoner: and as the remaining horsemen saw death was in him, they wheeled round, and sought flight; but lo! in front of them were sturdy knights; so they surrendered themselves to captivity and chains; and when morning dawned, the hundred horsemen were pinioned.

Harith looked at Ibla, who was in tears, and casting her eyes round right and left, and he would have spoken to her. O Harith, said Aswad, knowing his situation, we cannot let you do such an act as that; it is impossible, till you see Antar dead. And Harith soon repented of having rescued them, as he communed with himself,—If I go to Numan, and Mootegeredah should ever hear that I have released her brother's foes, and have captured the Abasian women, never will she permit her husband to give me any favourable answer: the best thing I can do, will be to go with these ordures, that I may watch my opportunity with them, and make them all drink of the cup of death; and then seize Ibla, and fly with her to some corner of the earth.

The Brandisher of Spears knew what he was about. O Prince, said he, turning to Aswad, Harith

repents of having rescued us; it will be as well to remove him from us before evening. You know, O Chief of the tribe of Marah, said Aswad to Harith, that we are now marching to the tribe of Fazarah. But I am aware, that Cais and Antar must have annihilated them. My advice is, that you join them till I send you aid from my brother Numan; for I cannot permit you to enter Irak, till Cais be led before you in fetters and chains, and the head of Antar be on the tallest of spears.

Harith knew they were afraid of him; however, he had nothing for it but to turn away his horse's head, and seek his tribe and his people. He continued his road till he reached the tribe of Fazarah, whom he informed of the release of the prisoners, and that he had sent the Absian baggage-camels to Irak; and I, he added, will consent to assist you. Sinan burst into tears in a fit of joy, and felt convinced that all was now right. Harith asked about Antar; We know nothing of him, said they.

Harith concealed himself, till ascertaining that Antar was absent, he discovered himself, and attacked the troops, and dispersed the camp, and took King Cais prisoner. But in compliance with Sinan's advice, that he should release Cais, and ransom Hadifah and his brothers, he summoned Cais, and made a covenant with him, to which Cais gave his consent, and swore he would release Hadifah and his brothers from bondage.

They accordingly set him at liberty, and he returned to the Absians, who were delighted at his

arrival, and inquired what had happened to him with the Fazareans. He ordered Hadifah and his brothers into his presence, and he gave them honorary robes, and released them: returning them their horses and their arms, he sent them home, having first asked them to make peace; but Hadifah refused. When they reached the tribe of Fazarah, their troubles diminished, and their joys increased. Sinan and Harith advanced, and saluting them, conducted them to the tents; and on that day there was no fighting.

As to the Absians, when King Cais had liberated Hadifah and his brothers, he assembled his brothers, and Rebia, and his tribe, and began to consult with them how he should conduct the war against the Fazareans. My advice, O King, said Rebia, is, that we should protract the combat; perhaps our cousin may come to us, he, the reliever of our sorrows—Antar, son of Shedad, and repay them for their outrages. We must, said Cais, make one united attack, and perhaps we may punish the iniquity of that Harith, son of Zalim. That's the thing, said the Absians.

The next day the Fazareans mounted, and sought the contest; the Absians also made an universal assault; limbs were soon cut off; the polished blades and lengthened spears laboured; heroes were laid low on the scene of horrors. The affair continued in this state till mid-day, the Fazareans being well backed against the Absians by the presence of Harith.

But lo! a dust arose, and covered the land; and

in an hour there appeared five hundred horsemen in armour, and at their head was a knight like a mass of a mountain, or the declivity of a vast rock ; and he shouted out, O by Abs ! O by Adnan ! Retaliation for Malik, son of Zoheir ! I am Zayidah, son of Museeb : then repeating his shout, he attacked the Fazareans. His men followed him to the assault, and in less than an hour they drove back the Fazareans to the tents.

When Harith saw this, he uncovered his head, and attacked till he retrieved the day by his vigorous resistance. Thus the combat continued till evening, when the two armies separated. The Fazareans alighted at their tents, and thanked Harith for his exploits : and thus also the Absians alighted at their tents, and thanked Zayidah for his achievements.

King Cais having asked Zayidah about the cause of his coming, O King, said he, I heard what had happened to you with the filthy tribe of Fazarah, and how they had massacred the children. I could not endure such deeds : I thought indeed you would have sent to require my assistance ; but as no one came to me from you, I mounted with these warriors, and am here to aid you ; and were it not for Harith, I would easily defeat the Fazareans. Tomorrow, however, I will challenge him ; perhaps I may kill him, and relieve the Arabs from his atrocities, and his treacheries, and malice. On hearing this, King Cais reposed quite happy. As to the tribe of Fazarah, By the protection of an Arab, said Harith,

verily that Zayidah is a noble horseman, but to-morrow I must kill him.

They reposed that night, revolving under the will of the most merciful God, whom nothing human can change, till the day dawned, when the two parties having mounted to the scene of action, lo! Harith started forth, eager for the contest; and as he galloped and charged, he thus recited:

“ I regard no man as a friend, and I make absence an exchange for enjoyment. Whenever a friend asks a favour of you, betray him, and requite a good action with an evil one, as a foe, and hurl down every one with the long spear. Ply the sword amongst all your relations, and slay every one with the polished sabre. Betray your companions and family, till you see the dearest in infamy. When you want a comrade, associate with a spear, and be not separated from your bright scimitar. Abandon your family, forsake friends; laid low on the back of the earth, let them lie dead. O Absians, I will singly attack you this day with deeds that ages shall record. My sword shall not rest in the darkness of its sheath, and it will not be reconciled to any one instead of me. My scimitar, and my arms, and my spear, shall tear ye out, root and branch. Think not I regard a friend that he can please me. I love no friend; come forth then, and behold the combat of a youth, a vanquisher, who considers numbers as nought; see how he will act among ye on the back of his colt that will

“trample down heroes in the day of battle. My heart this day is sick, ease therefore my sickening heart with the contest. I am Harith, son of Zalim; my name is famed for perfidy throughout the tribes.”

The Absians replied to Harith's verses with curses and abuse. Zayidah longed to attack him, but one of his cousins anticipated him; he was a stout horseman, and a noble warrior; he rushed on Harith; he stood up on his saddle; then stretched himself out on his stirrups, and drove at Harith a fierce thrust. But as Harith watched the spear aimed at his chest, he unsheathed his sword, and at one blow clipped off its point. Then he closed on him, and pierced him with his lance through the chest, and forced the barb out quivering through his back; he hurled him down dead, weltering in his blood. Again he rushed at the standards of King Cais, shouting, O Absians, this is not your custom, thus to let others fight for you; why stand ye still on the backs of your horses? Sally forth, if ye are desirous of glory. If you wish to withdraw, I will let you, on condition that ye abandon for ever the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi. I will accommodate you among my tribe of Marah, and I will intercede for you with King Numan, provided you first send me your slave Antar bound in chains, that I may kill him, and retaliate on him, and deliver him to King Numan. On hearing this harangue, King Cais was anxious to order his army to attack, but Zayidah would not permit him, for rushing upon

Harith, he thus exclaimed, Eh ! how foul are thy qualities ! Art thou not ashamed barely to mention such odious propositions ? and thus he continued :

“ If thine eye regards iniquity as virtue, by my life, thy blindness has lasted too long. If perfidy were to smite thee with the cleaving sword, it would see its favourite disgraced. Thou hast gained a name by the murder of Khalid, till thou hast filled the unwatered deserts with the talk of thy deeds. Thou didst go to him as he slept, and thou didst force the polished sword against him in the obscurity of night. But now hail to thee ! verily thou shalt taste of prolonged tortures from the edge of my scimitar and the barb of my spear.”

These two intrepid heroes met like two ferocious leopards, and a contest ensued that startled the boldest, and amazed the stoutest. They continued in this state till mid-day, when they were enveloped under the dust. Harith despised his antagonist ; but perceiving his uncommon powers, he exerted himself in the combat of blows and thrusts, fearful that the tribe of Fazarah should regard him with an eye of inferiority. So he assaulted Zayidah like an enraged lion, and smote him on the head, splitting his casque and his chains ; the sword continued to work through him till it issued between his thighs, and he fell dead, cut in two. The Fazareans sent forth shouts of exultation, when lo ! a knight advanced towards King Cais : he was close

vized: Dost thou not know who I am? said he. No, young man, said Cais. I am Còsoorah, Harith's brother, said he, who has outraged you after all your kindness. I am resolved to go out against him myself, and, perhaps, I may relieve the Arabs from his iniquities; for greatly has he dishonoured our kindred by his acts. I wish therefore to try myself in the combat with him, and whether I am victorious over him, or he kill me, I shall be eased of his perfidy. King Cais was exceedingly astonished. These two are brothers by the same father and mother, said he to his chiefs; but what a difference is there between them in courtesy and generosity! Thus started forth Còsoorah against his brother. Eh! thou faithless villain! he exclaimed, what means this depravity? this outrage against the warriors? hast lost thy senses? or is it thy folly that goads thee on? Thou bastard! cried Harith, recognising him, and he was immediately inflamed with intense wrath and indignation, I sent after thee to come and assist me, but thou wert gone to the Absians, and fearest not my power: now thou art come even to fight me. And as he spoke, he assailed his brother with the utmost fury; but Còsoorah met him like a sparkling fire. (The Arabs, in those days of ignorance, used to call Harith the Violator, and Còsoorah the Intrepid). And they continued the spear-thrust and sword-blow till every eyeball was sickened. They continued in this state till evening came on, when Harith desisted from the engagement, saying, Return to thy comrades

for this night; had I wished thy death, I would have slain thee at the very first. By the faith of a noble Arab, said Cosoorah, thou hast no escape but by flight; if thou retirest from before me, I will pursue thee to the tribe of Fazarah, and will bring defeat down upon thee; for I only came to fight thee, because thou hast glutted the universe with the scandal thou hast brought on the Arabs. On hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Harith. He rushed at him, and smote him with Zoolhyyat on the head, and divided him down to the belt of his back, and he hurled him over cut in twain. Confounded at Harith's deed, the two armies shuddered at the hardness of his heart against his brother, the son of his father and mother. As to King Cais, he vanished from existence at the horror of this catastrophe. He remained that night in the greatest distress at being thus abandoned by Harith, for he could not imagine what would happen, or how it would all end. As to Harith, when he had slain his brother Cosoorah, he retired to the tribe of Fazarah, where Hadifah and Sinan met him, and thanked him for his achievements, and for the murder of his brother.

At the dawn of day the two armies prepared to engage, when lo! Harith started forth galloping and charging, and challenging to the contest. Come forth, ye Absians, he cried, against the grasper of lives! him who converts joy into sorrow—him who regards no engagement—him who acknowledges no brother—no

cousin. King Cais would have ordered the troops to a general assault, but the Chief Shedad started out against Harith, who encountered him, and commenced the blow, and the draughts of instant death : he had even wounded him ; but just as he was about to close upon him, lo ! a dust arose, and as it cleared away, there appeared the bridegroom of war and battle—the destroyer of sturdy warriors—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the instructor of heroes in battle—he, in whom the world glories—the Chief Antar, son of the Chief Shedad, and his companions were like devouring lions ; and as the Absians beheld Antar advance, they set up the shout of joy, Oh what a glorious morn ! King Cais kissed him between the eyes, and told him what Harith had done, how he had slain his brother, and wounded Shedad. And to his inquiries of Antar about what had happened with Aswad and their wives and property, O King, said Antar, I have rescued our prisoners and our heroes, and I have returned Aswad to bondage and captivity, and we have not lost a single article, not even the value of a halter. The cause of this was, that Antar with ten warriors and Shiboob followed Aswad's track ; and when their eyes met, Antar roared in a voice that made the mountains and the whole country resound, Ignoble dastards ! I am Antar, son of Shedad : let go those women and children. No sooner did Aswad and his companions hear the voice of Antar, the lion-knight, than they were stupefied and confounded ; their bodies were struck

with horror ; their complexions changed. Come on, cried Aswad to Locait and the Brandisher of Spears ; on to the sturdy slave, for he has only a small party of cowards with him. Comfort your heart and brighten your eye, cried they all ; soon will we show you a day of horrors. But our opinion is, you should station a party of us over the prisoners, that our hearts may not be occupied in the hour of battle. This being done, the Brandisher of Spears and Locait with their warriors returned to engage Antar, who received them as the parched earth the first of the rain : he yelled in their horses' faces, and thus drove them on their haunches, and made them hurl their riders off their backs. As soon as the women heard the voice of Antar, their pain and sorrow vanished ; joy and gladness visited them. Shiboob sought the post of the prisoners ; he met the heroes that were stationed over them sitting still, and contemplating the battle. He rushed towards Harith, son of Zoheir, in the rear of the guards, who were leisurely enjoying the spectacle of the combat : he released him from bondage, and, in less than an hour, they had released one another : then mounting the horses to which they had before been bound, they made an assault to assist Antar, exclaiming as in one voice, O by Abs ! O by Adnan ! At this shout his powers expanded ; but Aswad seeing the prisoners rescued, was alarmed. He would have fled, but Shiboob perceived him. Follow me, O Prince, he cried out to Harith, son of Zoheir. But the warriors of Aamir and Darem,

when they saw Aswad fly, gave their bridles to their steeds. Antar pursued them with the Absians, till they drove them out of that country, having first taken ten prisoners, and slain twenty heroes; the remainder bent their fugitive course towards the wastes and the wilds.

Antar and his comrades were returning, when lo! Shiboob and Harith, son of Zoheir, advanced with Prince Aswad their prisoner, whom they dragged along as they would a camel. Eh! O Eberiah, said Antar, how didst capture Adwad? Know, my brother, replied Shiboob, when he beheld you, and how you slaughtered his men, he fled; but I pursued him till I overtook him; I smote his horse, and wounded him in the pasterns. Aswad fell off; I jumped on his breast; he resisted; I drew forth my dagger, and he cried, Quarter, O Shiboob! and surrendered himself to me. I pinioned him well, arms and shoulders. Antar congratulated them on their safety, and wishing the women joy on their security, he stationed a guard over Aswad and his comrades. O Antar, said Aswad, what advantage is there in keeping me in captivity? Let me go this once, and accept me as your friend and companion in every strait and difficulty. Eh! and why should I let thee go? said Antar; just to assemble against me all thy host and tribes, and come and engage me a second time? Who, said Aswad, can ever dare to fight thee again, or ever come near thee in the combat? Never will I approach the spot where thou art. Know too, O Aboolfawaris,

that Harith is gone to fight on the side of the Fazareans. Upon this the heart of Antar was alarmed for the Absians, till day dawning, he mounted with his brave companions, and they travelled over the wastes and the sandhills till they reached home, where they reposed in the tents one night, and having placed Ibla and the other women in security, Antar again mounted ; and as he passed over the deserts and the wastes, he recollected all the wars he had been engaged in, and thus recited :

“ I bade adieu to her whose absence has deposited
 “ in me a flame whose smallest work is its blazing.
 “ I have quitted her, but my heart is with her, and
 “ I have preserved my covenants and stipulations
 “ with her. O Ibla, were absence a substance, thou
 “ wouldst see what burthens I have borne. As to
 “ the calamities of fortune, were they scimitars, their
 “ flash should not terrify me. O Ibla, how oft the
 “ raven of the desert croaks in love, and truly its
 “ croaking gives me ease. I was born for the tumultuous war of vengeance, when the bright foreheads
 “ of the high mettled steeds rush impetuously to
 “ the contest, and the brilliancy of the atmosphere
 “ is blackened with their dust, and the lustre of the
 “ sun’s rays vanish, and the thrusts clash with the
 “ barbs of the spears, whose lacerating gores wrench
 “ out the folds of the entrails. Never have I been
 “ present in the battle, on the day of horrors, but
 “ that I have made the whole country flow in blood.
 “ The horsemen look at me, in the day of the battle,
 “ with eyes, whose balls are fixed on high. They

“avoid me, and their fears tell them that the sheath
“of my sword is their necks. They abuse my
“complexion for its swarthy, day and night;
“their hypocrisy is the least evil they speak. I have
“a sword, were it brandished in Hajir, even Irak
“would sparkle with its lightning.”

As Antar repeated his verses, his companions were much delighted at his expressions, and his compliance with the times. They hastened forward till they came up to the Absians. King Cais had not finished speaking of Harith, son of Zalim, when Shedad, Antar's father, returned from his engagement with Harith; he was wounded, and his shoulder was raw with blood. Antar, as he viewed his father, wounded, and in that plight, had not the command of his senses. He rushed against Harith, who, observing the confusion, was still wavering between truth and doubt, uncertain what to think, till Antar himself stood before him, in the plain of battle; and as he looked at him, his limbs shook as with an ague: he was stupefied—he was aghast. Eh! thou ordure-born, cried Antar, how speedily thou hast forgotten favours! how quickly hast thou betrayed thy friends! verily, thou hast no honour, no word to be believed. By the faith of an Arab, I must slay thee, and thus Antar recited:

“Congratulate thyself, O Harith, that thou hast
“fallen on a hero, accustomed to plunge into darkness, ever amongst warrior princes. Thou shalt
“see in me this day a lion-hero, that deals the blow

“ of tombs ; the battle is veiled—the contest is,
“ darkened, but retreat not, that my soul’s anguish
“ may be extinguished. How many lion-heroes
“ have I slain with my sword, and how many gores
“ have I driven with my spear ! Never has the
“ flourish of the spear-barb glittered in the morn,
“ but I was the first among the troops. I launch
“ into the hottest of the fight, and the dust is its
“ pavilion far extended over the plains. Death, in
“ the day of contention, serves my arm, and my
“ sword hews away the joints. Fiends dread my
“ power and my assault. Man, too, has felt my
“ virtue. I am fate amongst the foe—I am the
“ calamity—I am the establisher of woe amongst
“ the tribes. My star is above the minutest stars in
“ the constellation of the Great Bear ; and as to my
“ ambition, kings talk of it in their assemblies. My
“ chest is broad, and my spear is a tearer, and my
“ vehemence is acknowledged in every army.”

Now Harith hung down his head towards the ground in fear of Antar. He meditated a while, and was confounded ; again he had recourse to his artifices and stratagems. Welcome, welcome, O Aboolfawaris, he cried, thou ornament of assemblies ! thou lion of the land ! thou sublime in glory ! thou pardoner of sinners ! thou defender of children and women ! O Aboolfawaris, verily I have sinned against thee, and what thou hast said of me was justifiable, for thou hast reduced me to that state, that I can no more raise up my head among the warriors. Indeed, I repent of my conduct towards

thee, in the deepest manner; but thou art acquainted with my story, and what has happened to me. I perceived my chance of success with Numan was weakened, and my apprehensions were realized. So I set at liberty Aswad and his horsemen, thinking that thy matters would be easily arranged with Numan. But the reverse is the event; for they still demand me, and had I not fled, they would have put me to death. But now that is all over; and I have no apology thou canst accept; I must exert myself in the contest with thee; but afterwards I will dismount from my horse, and cast myself under the hoofs of thy horse, Abjer, and will humbly ask thy forgiveness. Canst thou then pardon me this once? And if I ever again betray thee, may the mother of Harith be no more a free-born woman. May God curse thee, Harith, said Antar, above all mankind, and all that put their trust in thee or believe thee! But if I could suppose that forgiveness could purify thee, I would pardon thee. O champion of the Absians, cried Harith, thou knowest my sword Zoolhyyat is my greatest joy, and dearer to me than the life that animates my body—take it and forgive me, and he actually sheathed his sword and delivered it to Antar. Antar was amazed at his words, and astonished at his actions; for the surrender of arms prohibited all contest, and he dared not raise his hand against him. O Harith, said he, restoring his sword, I cannot from my heart confide in thee, and from me towards thee there can be no security or protection, but through King

Cais. And I know there is too much resentment in his heart against thee, for me to be responsible for him, and to engage his protection for thee. Yet march on before me, that I may intercede with him. So Harith went on before him, and whilst the two parties were amazed at seeing him (for they knew not what had happened), Hadifah began to quiz Harith. Eh ! Harith, he cried, hast thou then returned to fight for this bastard slave ? Woe ! woe ! O Aboolfawaris, cried Harith, turning round (for his back was towards Antar), scandal to the Arabs that they should thus speak of thee, and call thee bastard, and the least of thy acts towards me is this thy act, and this thy beneficence. Never will I return to the presence of King Cais till I have white-washed my face with him, either by the death of Hadifah or his captivity. And he drew forth his sword, quicker than the lightning's flash, and struck Antar a full blow on the head, and he attempted to kill him in the presence of the assembled nations. On Antar's head was one of the Chosrowean helmets, on which he always depended ; but Harith's sword split it, cut the lining and wadding, and fell upon his head, making a gash on his forehead, and causing the blood to flow over his beard. Afraid, lest he should repeat the blow and destroy him, Antar exhibited the utmost steadiness. He shouted out to Harith with the roar of a lion, and directing his spear against him, resolved to pierce him ; but Harith fled from before him, and sought the tribe of Fazarah. The day now disappearing, Antar

retired. The Absians met him on horseback, and stanching the blood, bound up his wound. King Cais and his brother also hastened up and inquired how he was. Antar told them the whole circumstance, and repaired to his father's tents, bellowing in the excess of his fury and rancour. He reposed that night, but was all anxiety for the dawn of day, that he might sally forth to the battle, and relieve his heart in the blows of the scimitar. As to the tribe of Fazarah, they reposed in a state of most perfect happiness. Hadifah went to meet Harith, and thanked him for what he had done, saying, 'Truly thou hast eased my sorrows, and hast done a deed shall be recorded from generation to generation; and hadst thou but slain that dæmon, thou wouldst have been the paragon of the age! O Ebe Hajar, said Harith, this hero cannot be numbered amongst the warriors thou hast ever known. Speak not much to me on this subject, for I am well aware of Antar's style of fighting, and I only dealt him the blow of one already terrified. I had deceived him, but my heart did not feel secure in him, so I resolved to exert my power over him, before he should exert his power over me, and I have wounded him. He has courted the combat, and in every respect he is a true hero. They continued thus till the laughing morn approached, when the warriors drew their swords, and extended their spears. The first who started forth to the field was the knight of the precipitate attack—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the raiser of the lofty column—the noble

Prince Antar, son of Shedad. He sought the contest, calling out for Harith, his heart full of resentment ; and when the Fazareans saw him, and heard his harangue, they were bewildered and amazed, Hadifah inquired for Harith, but they could not find him, and it was said that he had fled, taking with him ten of the most intrepid horsemen. Now Harith, in fact, was aware that Antar would not care for his wound, but would come forth in the morning to challenge him, when he would be under the necessity of fighting him ; therefore, only waiting till the darkness thickened, and the eyes of mortals were asleep, he took with him ten horsemen, and carried off a good string of camels, belonging to the tribe of Fazarah, and sought the land of Mecca. Hadifah was greatly troubled. May God curse Harith, son of Zalim, and afford him no security on the road, said he ; for he has not regarded the rights of his friend. Antar's rancour was at its height. He assailed the Fazareans, and rushed upon them—he laid low the horsemen—he destroyed the brave—and he cut his way through the heroes ; and when the Absians saw his attack, they prepared to assist him ; but Cais prevented them, saying, Let us abstain from the combat, that we may ascertain what is become of Harith ; perhaps he may be concealed. So he sent word to Antar, and told him of the state of things. Antar bore the battle alone till evening, when he retired. The tribe of Fazarah was in the greatest consternation ; all their fortitude was staggered—their heads hung down, and they passed

that night in fears, forming various conjectures. The next day, they again mounted for the combat, and long lasted the thrust with the tall spears, and the blow with the polished scimitars. Antar and the horsemen set fire to the hearts of the tribe of Fazarah—they drove them to their tents. The parties continued in this state for three days; on the fourth, the horsemen allied to Hadifah separated, and sought their own country, frightened at Antar and his assaults. Thus the tribe of Fazarah being disgraced, depended on the heights of the mountains. The Absians seized their dwellings, and took up their abode there, surrounding the Fazareans on all quarters, and cutting off every communication; for Antar vowed, that he would not leave of the tribe of Fazarah one to speak or one to hear. This state of things continued ten days; they were in the greatest difficulties, and every friend and comrade had abandoned them. They lighted fires by night on the mountain tops, and fortified themselves amongst the sandhills. By day, Hadifah descended on foot with his brothers, possessing themselves of the ways and defiles, and defending their families with their scimitars and glittering swords, but feeling certain of overwhelming calamities. On the eleventh day, Hadifah assembled them. O my cousins, said he, know that Antar will not quit us, and will not leave a remnant of us alive; so fight the foe—expose your lives—pierce them with the spears, and dearly sell your existence. Thus he continued to encourage them with harangues, till they disregarded life.

Armour felt light; they mounted their generous steeds, and snatching up their tall spears, they precipitated themselves from the mountain-tops. But the women began to weep and lament, and a crowd of noble slaves followed them. The Absians were eager for the contest, and Antar hastened to the scene of spear-thrusts and sword-blows; but Cais, observing the desperate fury of the Fazareans, said to Antar and the Absians, O my cousins, by the God of heaven, attend to me, retire to some distance from them; thus urged on by their own virulence, they will soon be mixed with us in the desert, then let us turn upon them and plunder their lives. And he wheeled away his horse, and Antar followed him. The others, seeing the banners move away, also turned their horses heads and retired. The Fazareans were greatly delighted; their eagerness was excited—they raised their shouts, and galloped forward to capture the Absians. The dust arose—the sun was veiled; and Hadifah cried out, O my cousins, ply the sword on the foe; let not one survive! King Cais and Antar exulted, and wheeled all at once, followed by the noble horsemen; and the spear-thrust commenced after this short suspension. The heroes clashed against each other—exertion was universal—artifice availed not—conversation was at an end—horses trampled over the plain—hands, right and left, were palsied—valleys were not distinguished from mountains. The dust arose like night, and war was in all its terrors. The brave exulted on their saddles, and persisted—the coward

felt assured of death and despair—blood flowed and streamed—the hearts of the bravest failed—the battle continued to rage till the Almighty permitted the day to depart; the warriors were laid low upon the sands, and gray were the locks of infants on that day. But God prospered the Absians, and nothing appeared sweeter to them than death, and the approach of fate. This was their condition, when lo! a dust drew nigh, and it moved along like a cloud that equalized the hills and the vallies. The arms of both parties instantly relinquished the blow and thrust, for they thought it was the dust of Harith returning, and with him a party of villains. In an hour, the dust cleared away, and there appeared a tribe of Hijaz, and some horsemen of Mecca, in Yemen cloaks, and turbans of Kufian silk, all girded with straight spears, and scimitars of India; and their countenances were like the sparkling constellations: round them were slaves with Yemen javelins, all like lions, and clothed in panther skins; and when they advanced out of the dust, they moved gently between the two ranks and exclaimed, O by the Arabs! sheathe your swords, from striking bodies and skulls. Ye have agitated the chiefs of the sacred shrine: this is the Lord of the Holy Wall and Zemzem, the obeyed monarch, Abdulmotalleb, of the tribe of Hashem. Withdraw from the contest; hear what he says, and presume not to oppose his word. At hearing this, the two parties separated.

King Cais came forward, and saluting him, kissed

his hand. He attended him, and followed him till they reached the land of Shurebah, where the horsemen alighted at their tents, and the people were united to their wives. King Cais ordered sheep to be slaughtered, and a feast to be prepared, whilst Abdulmotalleb began to describe to them the peculiarities of Mecca, and the holy shrine, the virtue of Zenzem and the temple, and the appearance of our Lord Mohammed, the lamp of darkness. (May the peace of God be on him and his noble associates as long as the ringdove moans and the pigeon sings!) He informed him of his existence and appearance, and excited their wishes to live long, that they might perhaps comprehend him, and be guided by his light; and there was not one but anxiously longed to survive till his time that he might behold him, and might fight for him.

When the feasts of the tribes of Fazarah and Abs were over, Hadifah requested Aswad's liberty of King Cais, who assenting, asked the opinion of Abdulmotalleb on that point. It would be right, said he, to loosen his bonds. Summon him here, that I may make peace between you, and I will invite him to repair to King Numan, for he is the king of the age over every prince, and he commands all the Arabs; and by the truth of the God of old, no one is made a monarch or sultan but that there is imparted to him some secret knowledge to which a common man is not admitted; and were it not a favour from the God of heaven and earth, the post of honour of one would not be raised above another,

for we are all of the race of Adam and Eve. King Cais conformed with the orders of Abdulmotaleb; and sent some of his chief attendants to Aswad to release him from bondage. He invested him with a magnificent robe, and paid him every honour and respect, and begged his pardon for all that had passed. Abdulmotaleb took him by his side, and presented him some victuals. He ate till he was satisfied, and conversed; and in Abdulmotaleb's last words to Aswad he concluded by saying, Know, O prince, that God did not create men useless and helpless, and it is incumbent on his slaves to defend themselves against violence and oppression. Your brother is now King of the Arabs and Irak. Every thing is easy to him, because he has the language and the sword of a king; but it is his duty to settle the disputes of his people, and the Arabs, and the tribes, and not to act like a foolish man, for God will make him responsible for his tyranny. Thou hast seen how he has sent thee with armies and troops, but they have all been dispersed. All this is by the command of God, far and near. It is now deemed meet that thou shouldst return to thy brother Numan, and prohibit him from acts of outrage and hostility; advise him not to cut asunder the connexion between him and the tribe of Abs, and let him not act in a manner to incur the reproaches of kings and of the Arabs. It is ever particularly praiseworthy to respect kindred and relationship. O chief, said Prince Aswad, all these events were owing to Harith; but now that business is ter-

minated, and Harith has departed out of this land, I will request my brother to withdraw his aggressions from this tribe, and I will fill his ears with reproof and reproach.

Thus ended the day in feasts and merriment. The next day Abdulmotaleb took his departure, saying to King Cais, Every one must be aware that the horses of death are pursuing him, and that he is a captive in the grasp of fate and destiny; let him therefore content himself with a little in this world. Thus saying, he departed, accompanied with the chiefs of Abs and Fazarah, in order to bid him farewell. Aswad rode out also till mid-day, when he departed on his return to Irak. Abdulmotaleb halted in that country, and having made peace between the Absians and Fazareans, taking their bonds and covenants for the preservation of tranquillity, to which the Sheikhs of the two tribes were witnesses, he travelled over the wilds and the wastes. King Cais and Hadifah, with their companions, returned to their respective lands; but heart burnings and deep recollections still remained.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

As to Harith, when he fled from the tribe of Fazarah, he could find no asylum but at Mecca, for there every wanderer was secure. There he remained, and connected himself with his grandfather, who was called Marah, son of Luvee. Now one day when Antar was sitting alone in his tent, there came to him a man from Mecca, one of the hermits of the tribe of Abs that seldom quitted the sacred shrine. Antar inquired of Harith. I saw him, said he, in the sacred place established, eating and drinking, enjoying the property he had plundered; but in his heart there is a flame blazing against you. I beheld in him what I never beheld in any human being. What hast thou seen in him? said Antar. My cousin, said he, Harith was one day walking round the sacred shrine, his sword slung over his shoulders, when a man called Amroo, son of Atnabah, the Yathrabite, stared at him. He inquired who he was? they told him it was Harith, son of Zalim. How! this must be the man, said the Yathrabite, who slew Khalid, son of Giafer, when he was asleep; and is his murderer now alive? O Arab, cried Harith, overhearing him, how art thou called among horsemen? I am called Amroo, son of Atnabah. Yathrab is my place of abode and birth, said he.

What mean you by your question? You have abused me, said Harith, for murdering Khalid in his sleep; perhaps I may meet you when you are awake. Again the Yathrabite began to satirize Harith in the following manner:

“O my friends, soothe me with pleasures, and
“make me drink of the wine of enjoyment. Let
“me hear the damsels strike the cymbals at the
“time of joy and relaxation, when every new moon
“sparkles before me, and every true lover passes
“the evening with his mistress. I belong to a noble
“tribe, but that is not my boast; their parentage
“is known by the purity of their faith. My kindred
“is a branch of the race of Adnan, brilliant and
“resplendent with virtues. I am a knight, whom
“the sword and lance obey when the spears are in-
“terwoven. My companion and my aid in cala-
“mities is my sword, whose edge I adore. Tell
“Harith, son of Zalim, that I have spoken of him
“the words of a true reporter, and that no one but
“a coward kills a man asleep, and no one but a
“hero can kill a man when awake.”

When Amroo, son of Atnabah, had finished his verses, he set out on his return to Medina Yathrab, his heart boiling against Harith, for he dared not lay his hand upon him in the sacred shrine. Harith, learning from his spies and emissaries that Amroo had quitted Mecca on his way to Medina, followed him till Amroo entered his own dwelling. Waiting till night, he repaired to his house, and knocked at his door. Who art thou? said Amroo.

A suppliant for protection, said Harith. I will protect thee, said Amroo, by the faith of an Arab; were even Harith, son of Zalim, thy foe. If thou wilt aid me, added Harith, come not forth but merged in armour. Upon that, Amroo put on his arms, and plunged himself into his coat of mail; but his wife hung about him, saying, I smell blood in the voice of this caller; but he tore himself away from her, and paid no attention to her words. He went forth to the suppliant, and followed him; and when they had passed the palm-trees of Yathrab, O Amroo, cried Harith, turning round upon him, I am Harith, of whom you said he could only murder the sleeping. Thou art prepared, awake, clad in thy armour, and mounted on thy horse; now be on thy guard. Amroo was astonished, but resolved to fight him; he brandished his spear, and roared and bellowed. Son of Zalim, verily thou hast acted fairly, he cried, as he rushed at him. Harith met him, and the two engaged under the veil of obscurity, and continued to combat till the greatest part of the night was passed. Being now tired and exhausted, each stood apart from his antagonist; but Harith had again recourse to his artifices and perfidy: What say you, said he to Amroo, to cancelling the contract and abandoning the contest? Sheath thy sword, that I may also sheath mine. I heard your verses concerning me at Mecca, where you abused me for my conduct; they surprised me. I am desirous therefore to reply to them. Amroo sheathed his sword, and leaned against his spear, saying,

Well then, O Harith, let me hear what you have on your mind. And Harith thus recited :

“ Supply me, dearest friends, with pleasures, before my situation becomes too severe. Let not the railers glut themselves upon me, or see me a prey to sorrow. I care not when I wake on Tuesday whether they call me upright or a profligate. Ever let me replenish the ewers with excellent wine morning and evening. Moreover, never have I betrayed my engagement to God in my life ; but a story from my enemies has reached me that would make the heart forget the cruellest disease, that no one but a coward slays a man asleep, and no one slays one awake but a hero. So I have traversed the deserts on my black steed, resembling the obscurity of night, anxious to engage in combat with the youth of Yathrab, that virtue may not appear like vice. I visited him when darkness had spread out its foot : he was like a full moon in the cup of the Pleiades. I challenged, and swift as a lion he welcomed me as soon as he saw me. I challenged him, and I beheld a hero mighty in the contest ; a knight, at whom knights might quake with horror when he shakes swords or Semherian spears.”

Amroo dismounted from his horse, and hastened in the fullest security of mind to embrace him, and to adjure him to enter Medina Yathrab with him. But Harith, as he saw Amroo approaching him, extended his arm, and opened wide his elbow, and stretching forth his spear more rapid than lightning,

he pierced Amroo through the chest, and drove it sparkling through his back, and hurled him down dead. He ran at him; he carried away his horse, and spoiling him of his arms, abandoned him cast down on the desert.

When Antar heard this account of Harith, the fire was kindled in his heart, and he placed spies and scouts over him. But Harith, after he had slain Amroo, and left him on the waste, returned to Mecca, and sold Amroo's arms and horse in his fears, saying to himself, There is nothing now to be done but to go to Aswad, and request of him to make peace between me and his brother King Numan, and to secure his protection for me. He set out in the night, and travelled on till he reached Hirah, where he saw multitudes and armies like the rolling ocean.

Now Prince Aswad, on being released by Abdulmotaleb, repaired to his brother, to whom he related what had happened to him with the Absians and Antar, and the arrival of Abdulmotaleb, who had adjusted the disputes between the tribes of Abs and Fazarah. O my brother, he added, he is a wise man, between whom and the Absians there is no altercation, as long as Antar the violent death is among them, for he fears not whole hosts, and no power alarms him. As soon as he encountered us, he only made one dash at us; he defeated us; he made his way right through us; and there was not one of us left in his senses. If matters are as you, my brother, represent them, said Numan, consider

what must be done. By the faith of an Arab, added he, I am aware of, and I have proved Antar's superior intrepidity, and so has every army you have sent against him and the Absians; for there was no warrior that engaged him, the lord of battles, but he discomfited him were he even attacked ten times over. Verily, I have beheld in Antar what I never saw in any mortal man before. If matters stand thus, continued Numan, where shall we meet a warrior that can cope with Antar in the field, and make him drink of the cup of death? O my brother, replied Aswad, if you are desirous of Antar's death, there is no one but Harith, son of Zalim; for he nears him in courage and resolution, and general excellence, and in fraud and deceit he is the most subtle of men. As to Harith, said Numan, who knows where he is that we may send for him, and offer him wealth and property? I will bring him to you, said Aswad. Equip an army for him against the Absians, and see what he will do; and every one he may slay of them it will be so much gained for you. Do whatever you please, my brother, said Numan.

Aswad returned home, and found Harith in his house, who sprang up towards him, and kissed his hands. The prince, much pleased, and feeling assured that Antar would at any rate be slain this time, received him with every attention and kindness, and told him what had passed with his brother. Early next day Numan's messenger entered to order Prince Aswad into his presence. Return, said

he, to my brother, and tell him I have a guest, and he is afraid of him.

The messenger returned and told him, and Numan gave him a mantle of security, with which the messenger went back to the prince, saying, Your brother sends his compliments, and says, Bring me your guest; and if it be even Harith, son of Zalim, this is a mantle of security. Upon this, Harith started up together with the prince, and proceeded to the presence of Numan, where they saw a numerous assemblage of chiefs, and horsemen, and warriors; and when Harith's eyes fell on Numan, he kissed the ground in fear and terror: he kissed his hand, piteously stating his apprehensions and dread, and the grievances and evils he had endured; and whilst they were eating, and the cups of wine were circling among them, the conversation fell upon the horsemen and warriors of the age; they also mentioned Harith, and how he had by stratagem contrived to wound Antar. O cousins, said Numan, a man's subtlety and stratagem for conquest are the perfection of the art of war; and were not a knight to be subtle as well as expert in arms, he would not be called brave, and he would not be talked of by the heroes for his battles and his contests. And as the turn came to Harith, Numan continued, saying, Tell us something of your treacheries and artifices. On condition, said he, that you will permit me to relate what happened to me the other day. Well, let us hear it, said Numan.

O king of the age, began Harith, know that the

knights of the age, men of faith, are seven, viz. Di-reed, son of Samah ; Amroo, son of Wad, the Aamirite ; Amroo, son of Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian ; Zoolkhimar, the Himyarite ; Aamir, son of Tofeil ; the Brandisher of Spears ; and the Chief Antar, son of Shedad. The impostors are also seven, viz. Cadmoos, son of Majid ; Marah, son of Abdulazee ; Jarcer, son of Mubadir ; the Knight Awis ; Amroo, the Kelbian ; Saleek, son of Selikah ; and he was silent. And you are the seventh ? said Numan. Yes, said he.

And now, continued Numan, tell us some of your perfidious acts, and what stratagem you lately practised. O King, said Harith, my story is extraordinary, and it ought to be recorded after my death. It is thus : after my adventure with Antar, I left the Fazareans, taking with me ten of the noble Arab horsemen ; and when we had travelled half way, we stopped in a country called Mancabit ool Mesalik ; we became very hungry, so much so, that we were reduced to infinite distress and perplexity, when lo ! we saw a hovel built of straw, and a small tent pitched, at the entrance of which was a well-proportioned spear, and a sword suspended, and a horse saddled, and a youth of the dimensions of a lion, cooking his victuals on the desert. We galloped up to him ; Young man, said we, is there any Arab horde near you ? The youth raised up his head, and smiling at us, said, Why ask ye for villages and hordes ? These victuals are enough. Know, O Arabs, victuals were only formed to be

eaten, and property was only created to be spent. Liberal men are only esteemed by the wise; and the niggard is only fit to be killed: and ye are now entitled to honour and every attention.

When, O King, we heard this, we were surprised at the elegance of his mind: he immediately entered the tent, and returned bringing with him a large dish full of camel's milk, and mixed with the honey of bees cooled in the wind; and we drank of something sweeter than the purest water. We then let our horses loose to graze, and sat down.

As we were examining the young man's tent, and his arms, and his armour, and were wondering at his solitary life in the barren waste, I happened to turn round; my eyes fell on a damsel more lovely than the refulgent sun. Look, said I to my comrades, at that damsel, who is linked to the seat of my reason and my heart. She must be mine, were even this youth to give me to eat all the bread and salt in the universe. We therefore laid our plans to violate his faith, and to destroy his life; and whilst he was cooking victuals for us till all was ready, we were meditating villany and perfidy.

At last the youth entered the tent, and brought out a great quantity of Indian corn, which he put into a dish, and mixing it up with some meat and wine, he took up the dish by the handles, and placed it before us, saying, Advance, noble Arabs, come on; here are some victuals. So we ate till we were satisfied, and the youth stood waiting on us. And when he was about to take away the dish, I said,

What is this damsel to you? What mean you by that question? replied he. Know, O youth, I added, that your property is sacred to us, but we are a gang of Arab depredators, who admit of no faith; we acknowledge no sect; and every one that receives us kindly, we outrage. But as to you, we will spare you on account of your hospitality, as we have eaten your victuals. Take whatever horse you please of ours, escape, and leave the damsel, and your horse, and your tent, and say no more about it.

At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of the youth. This damsel, said he, who is in the tent, is my sister; and out of my great anxiety about her, I have secluded myself in this barren waste; but between you and me, there is a sacred respect and engagement, as you have eaten and drunk with me; and I wish you would leave us in peace. Know then, youth, said I, I must carry away this damsel and horse, were they even surrounded by a thousand of the noblest heroes: make no more noise about it, or I shall leave some food for the beasts and birds of prey. If it be so, said the youth, and you will not quit this desert, wait a little for me, that I may bid my sister farewell, and give her my last exhortation. That you may do, said I. And he repaired to his sister, and found her in tears, as she thus spoke:

“Never be the day that the troops mounted on
“roan steeds should see us prisoners. They desire thy
“death, my brother, maliciously; before this never
“knew I of sorrow or guilt. Fight then for thy

“ sister, who depends on thee ; thou art her brother,
“ thou art her father. Let not these wretches pos-
“ sess themselves of my person, or seize me by force,
“ whilst I am with thee ; for shame would fall on
“ thee, son of my father, and the horsemen east and
“ west would reproach thee. Fear not death, sped
“ by the hand of man : no one dreads it but a heart-
“ less coward.”

When the youth heard his sister speak thus, O King, he repeated these verses :

“ Take thy farewell of me, O maiden, before I die ;
“ aid me with thy prayers against the foe. Per-
“ haps the Creator of heaven and earth may pre-
“ serve thy brother from death. A perfidious party
“ has fallen upon us ; in them there is no warmth
“ of heart to pity thy sorrows. They have broken
“ the sacred rights of hospitality ; they have be-
“ trayed us, and they consider as lawful my blood,
“ and the dishonour of thy protector. Follow me,
“ and behold my exploits, when the steeds charge,
“ assaulting thy dwelling ; weep for me with the
“ sorrowing matrons, should I, after my combat, be
“ left dead. And when the dove mourns on the
“ Erak, O dove of the Erak, then aid me with thy
“ plaints. O daughter of Aamir, if they give me
“ fair play in the contest, I will destroy them for
“ love of thee ; but if the party outrage me,
“ and play me foul in the fight, my life will be
“ thy ransom. Alas ! alas ! should I die in my
“ transport, and the foe, when thy protector is no
“ more, take thee captive, O send my adieu to my

"father, and tell him I died by treachery in the meshes of a net."

As soon as the youth, O King, had finished his verses, he came towards me with a resolute heart. Thou motherless coward, he cried, come on to the fight, that I may show thee horrors. Seeing that he was determined to fight, and that he would slay the first that should go out against him, Go thou forth, said I to one of my comrades; and at the word, my companion rushed at him. The youth cried out, What is thy name? for I have sworn by an oath, that I will not fight with one whose name is like the name of my father. My name, said the other, is Nabish*. Ay, said he, and the gnawers shall gnaw thy flesh; and thus he addressed him:

"Whoever covets a girl, or a horse and spoil, for him there is a sword that deals death, and a knight like a lion, of Arab race, who, were he to see death distinctly, would not fly."

Thus saying, he rushed down upon my comrade like a driving cloud, and shouted at him like a roaring lion, and pierced him between the paps, thrusting his spear out between his shoulders. When I saw my companion fall dead, I said to his brother, Away now with thee, and retaliate for thy brother; and he sallied forth, but he slew him. Thus I sent one after the other, but the youth slew them, till my nine comrades were all killed, and I remained alone. The youth must be fatigued and exhausted in the

* i. e. Gnawer, or dog.

field, said I to myself; now I will stand forth against him, and will slay him, and enjoy the spoil and the damsel. I sprang at him like a lion of the forest. What ! said he to me, dost thou wish that I should sin against my oath ? and he attacked me. I met him, and there ensued between us a contest in blows and thrusts, that would have stupefied the eyeballs, and amazed the stoutest warriors.

We continued the engagement till it was dark, when crying out at me, Thou son of accursed parents ! he assaulted like a lion, darting at his prey. He drew his scimitar from its scabbard, and I saw death sparkling from the lustre of his sword. But I dismounted quicker than respiration. I threw myself under the belly of his horse ; Save me, O brother of the tribe of Aamir, I cried. Come forth, said he, thou art under my protection. And he immediately dismounted, and taking me by the hand, led me into the tent.

The youth stood up, and took off his armour and his other garments, as he said to his sister, Lay out thy knees for me that I may sleep. And he slept on his sister's knees, whilst she kept her eyes fixed on him. At last a drowsiness came over her also. I gazed at them till a third of the night was passed. On a sudden I jumped up, and unsheathed my Zoolhyyat in my right hand ; I smote him on the chest, and divided him down to his girdle. The damsel, when she felt the blood of her brother, and heard the blow, opened her eyes, and seeing her brother dead, she rolled herself in his blood, and

drew a dagger from his waist, and placing it against her bosom, she leant upon it, and it issued out through her back. Then, O King, I grieved for her, and repented of what I had done. So I seized the youth's spoils, his sword, and his horse, his arms, and the clothes of the damsel, and all the property of my comrades, their horses, and their arms; leaving their carcasses stretched out on the waste, not even covering one of them with earth: and this is the end of my tale, and its consummation.

No sooner had Harith finished, when lo! an old man started up; Art thou not ashamed, O Harith, he cried, to lie in the presence of this King? I know those people. If thou hast spoken the truth, show me some proof of it. Here is this ring, said Harith. Alas! my children, he cried. O King, this youth and damsel were my children, and Harith has murdered them; I must slay him: this is the ring of my son—read it. Numan took the ring, and read it, and lo! there was written thereon—Amroo, son of Harith. My vengeance is even more urgent than thy vengeance, said Numan to the old man; my fury is fiercer than thy fury: and he commanded his attendants to seize Harith. They accordingly seized him, and cast him into the dungeon of wrath. And the old man, the father of the youth, thus recited in the hearing of Numan:

“It is thus fortune acts with the great, and per-
“forms the deeds of revolving calamities; it gives
“all mankind sweets to drink at first, but its end
“is bitter as the meal of gall; it permits them to

“ enjoy themselves, and become intoxicated with
“ pleasure, but afterwards precipitates them into the
“ grave. I have seen how the world betrays its
“ inhabitants, for it has outraged me inwardly and
“ outwardly. O King of the Universe, listen to my
“ tale. I had a son, a knight among the tribes, and
“ he had a sister like the full moon when it rises, of
“ beautiful aspect, and of elegantly-shaped hands.
“ During my whole life I never possessed but them ;
“ but the revolutions of the age quickened its trea-
“ cheries against me ; a violent death has destroyed
“ them in the middle of the desert, and annihilated
“ them with the cleaving scimitars. If I live with
“ man, I will seek retaliation. The son of Zalim I
“ have met in the presence of Numan : he related
“ the story true and authentic, and confirmed by
“ the assertions of the actor. O King, this day wreak
“ vengeance on him, and slay him, who has made
“ my tears to flow in waves. Truly, my son was
“ asleep, and thou hast betrayed him : this is a fact,
“ for Harith was awake. Had it not been so, and
“ had he been mounted on the back of his colt,
“ that outstrips the blustering tempest, he had been
“ his match, fearless of the assaults of the Arab or
“ the Persian. Hadst thou not betrayed him, thou
“ coward born, he would have shown thee a blow
“ in the midday heat. But 'tis the decree of the
“ All-Merciful, who acts thus with all mankind ;
“ 'tis predestined fate. How many monarchs have
“ been annihilated ! How many warriors destroyed !
“ But the God of the celestial vault still endures, to

“ whom all secrets are known. My peace be with
“ the world, since my only one lies dead, felled by
“ the vilest of the tribes.”

When the old man had finished, and Numan had heard his tale, astonished at his eloquence, he thus replied :

“ Let the heart, O old man, give way to its sor-
“ rows ; for in the murder of Shirjibeel, I have been
“ heir to woe. The great God has decreed against
“ me the severest pains in grief and affliction, and
“ the loss of his society : O fortune, aid me with
“ tears and lamentations for the loss of a chief that
“ would have been the champion of the tribe ; had
“ he lived, he would have relieved the poor every
“ hour, and would have struck his antagonist with
“ the Yemen sword. But this cursed wretch hastened
“ him away with his perfidy, and made him, guilt-
“ less as he was, drink of the cup of death. O that
“ the whole tribe in a body had ransomed him with
“ my life and my property, and then my friends
“ and my family ! But the decree of the All-Mer-
“ ciful has separated us with the cup of division.
“ His will has decided : be patient, submit to fate,
“ in the dispersion of friendship, and the absence of
“ my beloved. Though Harith has overwhelmed
“ us with his perfidy, soon shall the people see him
“ an object of vengeance. We will hang him by his
“ hair, after torturing him, and we will abandon
“ him on the gate of the city. O that Shirjibeel
“ were present on such a day, and could ease the
“ pangs of his bosom from all fear ; O that on this

“ day he could understand what is said of him, and
“ hear the words of my prayer! but, O son of
“ Zalim, we will open his tomb and uncover the
“ recesses of his grave.”

When Numan had finished, he ordered the herald to proclaim in Hirah, that every one who wished to see the spectacle of Harith's execution, should be present the next day early at the centre gate. At hearing this, the people were delighted, and reposed. Early next day King Numan ordered a huge camel to be brought; they then produced Harith, and stripping him of his clothes, they nailed his hands to a long pole, and lighted candles of naphth on his shoulders, his chest, and his back, and having mounted him on the camel, they paraded him round Hirah, that every one might behold him: this was a great day, the like of which never occurred in any other realm. When Harith perceived his fate, he repented of having come to Numan, and thus he spoke:

“ Am I then Harith the lion of the valley, the
“ man renowned for iniquity? The murder of warriors by treachery was my glory, but I never fled
“ from the fiercest combat. How many women
“ have I captured from the tribes who never found
“ ransom from torture! My boast was to slay
“ sleepers in the night, and to capture women and
“ children. Atrocious is my nature; deceit my disposition; and I slay those that are present, and
“ those that are advancing. I knew not for what
“ I was coming, and that death without a guide was

“driving me along; they have mounted me on a
“huge camel, and have lighted candles over my
“hands. Alas! how foul is this death in which
“my foes and my haters triumph. There is no
“means to escape after all this; no ransom can
“release me out of their power. I could wish for
“one day of life, and to be possessed of my sword
“and horse: I would cut down the skulls with the
“decisive blow, till my wrist and hand were ex-
“hausted. I would scatter far and wide every
“combination with my shout, that should make
“every heart quake with horror. I would take
“vengeance on them with my arm. I would charge
“them like the lion of the valley. I would slay
“Numan and the old man who said, I am Harith,
“the father of the children. I would destroy all
“the horsemen in the battle with a sword of fire
“without a firestick. I would capture their women,
“and then violate them, and would relieve my
“heart of every sorrow. I am Harith, son of
“Zalim, the destroyer, one who never acknowledged
“the sacred rights of hospitality.”

Harith having finished these atrocious expressions, all the mob cursed him and reviled him; they dragged him off the camel, and nailed him against the city-gate, and shot at him with arrows till he was like a hedgehog, and pelted him with stones. After that they dug a pit for him and kindled a fire, and burnt him. And may God never have mercy on the mound of his tomb, or the tomb of his father! King Numan retired to his palace and held a coun-

cil, when lo! the messenger of Mocri-ul-wahsh * presented himself to give him joy on his arrival. And who is Mocri-ul-wahsh? said Numan. O King of the age, said one of his attendants, this knight is from the land of Syria; he has vanquished horsemen and warriors, and wishes to exhibit his prowess in your presence: he states that he demands no property, no favours of you, till he has proved his superiority over armies and heroes. At hearing this, Numan was rejoiced, and smiled: By the faith of an Arab, said he, if this knight fulfils his promise, I will give him whatever he demands, and I will send him to fight Antar, son of Shedad; for a wary knight takes advantage of every thing. He then directed Mocri-ul-wahsh into his presence, and received him in the most honourable manner. Now this Mocri-ul-wahsh was a horseman and a valiant hero; he had overcome all the armies of Syria; neither high nor low were able to cope with him. The reason of his coming to Hirah was, that he was enamoured of a damsel called Maseeka, the daughter of the King of Hooran. He had demanded her of her father, whose name was Majeer, son of Sahl, and he betrothed her to him, but required an immense quantity of cattle, and amongst other things, a thousand Asafeer camels. Mocri-ul-wahsh assenting to his request, made preparations that very day, and taking with him fifty horsemen of his tribe, he

* Feeder of wild beasts.

sought the land of Irak, when presenting himself to Numan, he told him what we have stated, and King Numan was amazed at his conversation and the immensity of his stature, and the thickness of his arms, and the agitation of his eyes. He took him by his side, and saluting him, called for dinner, and when it was brought, O knight of Syria, said he, know that I have a foe in the land of Hijaz, against whom all the armies and warriors have failed: all I demand of you is to vanquish him in the combat. O King, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, this is exactly what I wished and desired. Show me this knight who vanquishes armies and disgraces heroes; I will let you see what I will do with him in the field of battle, and with all his tribe and his warriors. By the faith of an Arab of Medher, said Numan, if you will but vanquish this Antar, and bring him a prisoner before me, I will not let you return home, but as a great king, with all the Asafeer camels. Mocri-ul-wahsh reposed for three days in the plenitude of enjoyment and noble hospitality; but on the fourth day Numan directed his men to order the armies to mount, that he might behold the prowess of Mocri-ul-wahsh. King Numan's troops being mounted to the number of twenty thousand, he himself also mounted, and the standards and banners were fixed over his head. Then mounted Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria. They beat the drums, and the cymbals, and the trumpets sounded. Upon this the horsemen started forth and charged. Soon after, Mocri-ul-wahsh,

the horseman of the tribe of Ghasan, came forth flourishing his spear on the plain, to the amazement of all the horsemen ; and as he thought of his beloved Meseeka, he thus spoke :

“ I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every desert,
“ and their provisioner in the flesh of every hero.
“ I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every battle ; I
“ destroy the foes with the sharp-edged scimitar.
“ I am the Feeder of wild beasts ; that is my name
“ and title. I destroy enemies and noble lion-
“ heroes. I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every
“ city, and I am the assaulting lion with warriors.
“ The inhabitants of Coori and Syria well know
“ that I destroy the Arab and the Persian. This
“ day, O King, thou shalt see that I am the knight
“ of knights with the spear-staff. If I do not
“ destroy Antar and his tribe, may my hand never
“ bear a lance or a sword. I will leave the country
“ of his tribe a waste, and I will drag its inhabitants
“ along in fetters like wild beasts. Alas ! O Ma-
“ seeka, keep thy engagement with me, and listen
“ not to the words of my bantering foes. I will
“ soon cast down the kings of the earth, east and
“ west, and I will sheathe my sword in the necks of
“ the Persians ; otherwise I shall never succeed in
“ my wishes, and I shall never accomplish what my
“ heart so ardently desires.”

When Mocri-ul-wahsh had finished, he galloped and charged and played with his spear over the plain, challenging his antagonists. (There were twenty thousand that day on the plain.) A knight

of the tribe of Wayil started forth, in whom shone every proof of courage, but Mocri-ul-wahsh stopped him short, as he was closing on him, and taking his foot out of his stirrup, he kicked him; and he fell headlong on the ground, he and his horse. A second, of the tribe of Lakhan, sallied out. He rushed at Mocri-ul-wahsh, and drawing his sword, he was about to smite him; but as he raised his hand with his sword, Mocri-ul-wahsh pierced him with a pike under the armpit, and threw him off his horse on the ground. A third, of the tribe of Shibān, then came out and assailed, but Mocri-ul-wahsh permitted him not to charge over the plain before he cast his pike out of his hand, and grasping him by his rings and his corslet, he dragged him off his saddle, and hurled him to the distance of twelve yards. They now came forward in tens, and twenties, and thirties. The business pleased him; and as he tossed up his head he attacked and assaulted the horsemen, and scattered them about, far superior to all the heroes. He continued thus till the day departed, and he had overcome five hundred lion-horsemen; but when Numan saw the intrepidity of Mocri-ul-wahsh, he was amazed at his force and skill: convinced he would vanquish Antar, he sent for him into his presence, and treating him with distinction, he gave him an honorary robe; he took him by his side, and returned with him to Hirah.

On the next day King Numan again mounted; the horsemen were drawn up in ranks, and Mocri-ul-wahsh, the horseman of the tribe of Ghasan,

advanced: he sent for a basin full of saffron, and fastened at the head of his spear a wadding steeped in the mixture, instead of a barb, in order to mark the horsemen with it, saying, That any one who could vanquish him in the charge might kill him, and should not be responsible for his blood; but that every one, whom he should mark, should retire from the field. Upon this, one thousand horsemen assaulted him—he met them and shouted in their faces—the horses reared up their heads, and calamities fell upon the riders—he rushed upon them—the dust encompassed them up to their bridles—till the sun was about to set, when Mocri-ul-wahsh had marked the thousand horsemen. King Numan ordered them to introduce Mocri-ul-wahsh to him; so the horsemen surrounded him, and conducted him to Numan, who gave him an honorary robe, and set aside some generous steeds, and treated him with all respect and attention, fixing over his head the standards and ensigns; he thus preferred him above the thousand brave knights, and also gave him tents, and pavilions, and banners; and Mocri-ul-wahsh became one of the princes of the age. I shall not deserve these honours and attentions, said he to Numan, unless I throw down before you the head of Antar, son of Shedad. Numan's heart was gladdened, and he wrote to all the Arab tribes.

About that time, the death of Harith, son of Zelim, was made known in every place, till the account reached the tribe of Abs and Adnan; and they were highly pleased at it, for they now knew that the

prop of the tribe of Fazarah was cast down. The heart of Hadifah was reconciled to Antar and King Cais, and they passed much of their time together, as also the other horsemen of the two tribes, till at last the Absians began to consult about Antar's nuptials: for King Cais had persuaded Malik, Ibla's father, to consent. About that time came a letter to Hadifah from his brother-in-law Aswad, telling him of Mocri-ul-wahsh, and saying, Rejoice, O Hadifah, in what will please you with respect to the Absians, for their total ruin is at hand; a horseman of the tribe of Ghasan is come to my brother, and he is now advancing towards you with armies like the swoln sea, and with them the Knight of the tribe of Ghasan. Rejoice in the completion of your wishes, and in the death of Antar, son of Shedad! On reading this letter, Hadifah was highly delighted, and he anticipated every good; but this news he kept secret. At the feast there was to be no one present but Rebia, of the family of Zeead, for he was the cleverest of them all; he was assiduous in his attendance on King Cais, and rejoiced in his joys, and in the security of his brothers, who were dispersed among the pastures, amusing themselves in the wilds and wastes with the slaves and shepherds, that they might not be eye-witnesses of Antar's marriage-feast, and not join in the general satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Now it happened soon after, that Talib, Rebia's brother, went out to the pastures with the camels, and was sitting under an Erak-tree, drinking and singing; and whilst he was thus occupied, lo! a horseman of the tribe of Fazarah passed by, called Hasein, son of Dhemdhem-ul-Meree (this warrior was the son of Hadifah's sister). Observing Talib sitting down in a state of intoxication, he went up to him; Son of Zeead, said he, you are singing here very jolly and merry, under no apprehension of the Arab warriors. Eh! O Hasein, said Talib, is there any security but in our land? Victory is on our banners, every good is in our merriment, and evil dwells in the country of our foes; for our swords are sharp, our spears long, and our arms strong and vigorous. Talib had not finished his reply, when Hasein rushed upon him, and shaking his spear in his face pierced him through the chest, driving the barb out through his back, and threw him down dead, weltering in his blood. He fled instantly to the tribe of Fazarah, and presenting himself to his maternal uncle, Hadifah, he told him what had happened. At which being much pleased, he, with a smile, told the warriors of Fazarah to repose under arms that night. But Talib's slaves and shepherds, when they

saw the fate of their master, placed him on his horse, and returned to the dwellings of the tribe of Abs, where they proclaimed the murder of Talib, and that Hasein was his murderer. At this, the family of Zeead knocked down their tents, and cut off the tails of their horses. May God destroy the tribe of Fazarah! cried Cais, much distressed; how infamous are their frauds! And they all began to weep and wail in grief, men and women.

King Cais summoned the family of Zeead and the noble Absians, and sent to order Hadifah to give up Hasein; but when the messenger arrived, and communicated his orders, Hadifah ordered him away: Tell Cais, said he, my nephew was intoxicated; and, besides, I am not a man to give up my sister's son to any king of the earth: but if you wish for the compensation, I will give you ten times the price of blood, so that the engagements between us may not be broken. The messenger returned, and reported Hadifah's answer. Rage and resentment took possession of King Cais; he shouted to the Absians, and ordered them to mount, and instantly the warriors and the heroes were ready; and no one remained behind but Antar and the family of Carad, it being only an affair of retaliation for the family of Zeead.

King Cais had just cleared the tents, and the eagle banners were just fixed over his head, and all were eager to march to the fight against the Fazareans, when lo! a special messenger appeared, advancing over the desert. King Cais halted, and the

Chieftains stared; the messenger dismounted from his camel, and hastening towards King Cais, he kissed his feet in the stirrup: and behold it was one of Mootegeredah's slaves. What's the matter, worthy slave? said Cais. O my lord, replied he, there are advancing in my rear armies like the swoln ocean, and with them a giant-knight and an intrepid lion, called Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of the tribe of Ghasan, the destroyer of the brave; be on your guard against death and destruction, for the armies in less than three days will be in this country: prepare, therefore, your implements of war against slaughter and ruin. At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Cais. And why did not your mistress, said he, inform us before the enemy marched against us, that we might have written to our allies, and those in whom we trust in our troubles and our relaxations? My mistress, added the slave, could not do so till the armies had departed; no one was permitted to stir out, for Numan had stationed guards over all the horse-roads till the moment the troops marched; then my mistress ordered me to set out with the news; so make your preparations, ere death overtake you. Cais's heart was greatly perplexed at these occurrences. He instantly sent for Antar, and told him what was planning, and that Numan was on his way with armies and Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria. This is all owing to your temporizing conduct, said Antar; had you permitted me to strike off Aswad's head, and slay his companions, many of these

troubles would have been avoided. My opinion is, we should march first against the tribe of Fazarah, and put them all to the sword, and leave them not a tent standing; then we will meet the armies of King Numan, were there even with him man and genii, and the fiends that rebelled against our Lord Soliman. O Aboolfawaris, said Cais, the foe is nigh at hand; and if we go against the Fazareans, we cannot reach them till evening; we must there repose till the morning; and certainly in two or three days we shall not be relieved of them; and I fear these foreign Arabs may reach our country whilst our property is unprotected, and thus succeed in their projects against us, and our troubles be prolonged. It will be more expedient for us to remain here and prepare to encounter the foe. My lord, said the slave who brought the news, the carnage amongst you will be trifling, but the prisoners numerous; for Numan has prohibited them from slaying, and has recommended them only to make prisoners, and for that purpose he has sent a number of his satraps, with Mocri-ul-wahsh, who, however, has engaged to slay Antar, the subtle hero, and has demanded as a reward a thousand Asafeer camels. Evil be his fate! false are all his hopes, said Antar, for by the faith of an Arab, I will have no knight of camels in our country, but hung to a gibbet. Do not consider us, cousin, said Cais to Rebia, as he retired, as neglectful of your retaliation; but when we have defeated Numan's armies, we will return upon the tribe of Fazarah, and will destroy their land, otherwise we

shall never be quiet. Thus the heart of Rebia was consoled; and the Absians alighted at their tents, preparing for the slaughter and the battle.

As to Hadifah, he was expecting the attack of the Absians, in retaliation for the son of Zeead, that he might raise a war against them, and appease his heart. The news reached him that Cais had mounted, and that his march was only interrupted by the arrival of a messenger, bringing news of Numan's approach with his armies. Hadifah was overjoyed, for he now anticipated the total destruction of the Absians, and he ordered the tribe to prepare for battle. As soon as day dawned Hadifah mounted Ghabra, and the horsemen followed him. As to Cais and Antar, they reposed that night, when lo! the next day the desert was filled with armies, and horsemen, and troops, like the swoln ocean, till the whole region was crowded, and the waste and wild appeared too confined for the multitude of banners and standards. Antar shouted to the warriors, and they mounted their chargers, whilst the weeping was loud among the women, alarmed at captivity and dispersion. Well, my cousin, said Ibla to Antar, this day the foe will take us captive. At this word the light became dark in Antar's eyes. Daughter of my uncle, he exclaimed, at thy captivity there will be the violent death, and the blow that is irresistible and unfailing. Antar uncovered his head and attacked, and his assault made the valleys and the mountains tremble. Now Antar had a shout of wrath, that made the mountains shake and the

hollows resound ; it drove back the horses in affright, and they hurled off their riders in the excess of their agitation, and trampled down each other. Antar shouted to the attack in the presence of Ibla, and assaulted the armies with a heart resolute in dangers. The Absian warriors attacked in his rear, all light-hearted in the intrepidity of Antar and his nephew Hatal : they met the armies of Numan with cleaving sword-blows that even Davidian corselets could not repel. Antar poured forth roars like crashes of thunder, whilst the Absian women encouraged the men to the carnage, crying out, Where is he who protects the women and the maidens ? Thus the Absians were engaged in the war of life and death, till they drove back the enemy from their tents by main force.

As to the Fazareans, Hadifah ordered them to the fight ; they assailed the Absians on all sides. Calamities thickened upon them, and misfortunes and catastrophes multiplied upon them ; and had not Antar been a dreadnought hero, the Absian tribe could not have survived that day, for the armies that attacked them consisted of fifty thousand bold horsemen ; and the tribes of Abs and Ghiftan amounted even to less than six thousand, and this proportion is wide of any proportion by which any calculation can be made. But in less than three hours horror of Antar pervaded the hearts of Numan's army, and the foremost shrunk back upon the rear, shouting at Antar from a distance, but not daring to approach the spot, where stood Antar, the

violent death. Mocri-ul-wahsh was highly incensed at the armies having commenced the attack without his permission, and at the assault of the Fazareans. Had I wished to destroy them, said he to his comrades, I would not have left them a spot to stand on: but Prince Aswad sent with me these foreign Arabs, that they might settle in their country, and be neighbours to the tribe of Fazarah. At last he resolved to attack Antar, the object of his amazement, saying, By the truth of the Messiah, this slave is a brave knight and a sturdy warrior. Should I vanquish him in the combat, I may boast over all the dwellers on earth. In the meantime Antar was in the fiercest of the fight, and the hottest of the thrusts and blows, raving like a camel, when lo! Hasein, son of Dhemdhem, treacherously came behind, and raising his spear in his hand aimed a dreadful thrust at him, crying out, Take this, thou ordure-born, at the hand of Hasein, son of Dhemdhem-ul-meree, the vanquisher of heroes. Antar turned round to see what was the matter, and the barb of the spear fell on the circle of the eye, and wounded him. Born of filth, thy blow has failed, he cried; a warrior is proof against the blows of such a poltroon. And he aimed his spear at him; but when Hasein saw this, he gave the reins to his horse and fled, and sought the tribe of Fazarah, where he related to his uncle Hadifah how he had deceived Antar and wounded him. Hadifah rejoiced: God prosper thee, O Hasein, said he, for what thou hast done to this son of a coward; hadst

thou slain him, thou wouldst have been exalted above all mankind. After this wound Antar kept a wary eye on the tribe of Fazarah, slaying an innumerable, incalculable number of them, till evening.

Numan's army retired and halted, in the greatest astonishment at the prowess of Antar, and the generous Absians. As to Antar, he retired at the head of his comrades, like a Judas tree, so great was the quantity of blood that streamed over him. King Cais met him, and saluting him kissed him between the eyes, and inquired about his wound. My wound, O King, said Antar, is quite well. To-morrow I will challenge Mocri-ul-wahsh to the combat; if he accepts it, all further trouble will be prevented. We will not permit you, O uncle, said Hatal, to engage in the contest whilst you are in this condition: depute me on this affair. O Hatal, said Antar, thou art indeed a noble fellow in the battle, but thy name is not Antar, son of Shedad. I know also, O Hatal, that the Absians besides Antar have no strong support, and to-morrow were I not to be present in the field, their women would be made captives, and their children orphans. O cousin, said Cais, may God never deprive me of thy exalted courage! Thus they separated, having first stationed the night-patroles; and when the men had quitted Antar, his uncle's women and Ibla came to him, and congratulated him on his safety. Ibla advanced, and bound up his wound and wept. Check thy tears, said Antar to her; he lives not who can harm thee.

Early next day they mounted, with Antar at their head like a devouring lion and a ferocious tiger. He had tied bandages round his head in order to excite Hasein against him, that perhaps he might challenge him. Numan's troops also mounted with Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria, as did also the tribe of Fazarah; but the satraps of Numan ordered them back. Hasein ran up to Hadifah; Uncle, said he, what means this? no one can comply with such orders. Can I too, I, who wounded Antar, son of Shedad, and left him nearly dead? Shall I leave to-day another to enjoy his death in the battle and contest? That shall never be, were I to drink of the cup of perdition. And he rushed into the field, and galloped and charged, challenging to the contest; and as he directed himself against the family of Carad, he thus addressed them:

“ O my mother, sleep, be satisfied, and rejoice;
“ this day will I relieve my thirst with Antar.
“ When thou seest the birds mangle his carcass
“ under the dust, then extol me and thank me.
“ The slave—I left him with a spear-thrust over
“ the face; the mark of which will ever endure as a
“ frightful eye-sore. The top of my spear-barb
“ tore out his eye, and I left him like a blind
“ camel. This day I will leave him on the face of
“ the earth, where he shall lie dead on the barren
“ waste. I will make him taste thrusts from my spear-
“ head, and I will smite him with my never-failing
“ highly-polished scimitar. I will leave the beasts
“ of the desert to run at him, and prowl round him

“ on the wings of the turbid night. I will wipe out
 “ my shame with my sword and spear, and I will
 “ wreak my vengeance on the swarthy slave. I will
 “ destroy the Antar of Abs in the day of battle with
 “ my sabre, my lance, and my spear. When he is
 “ no more, the land of the Absians will soon remain
 “ an abandoned waste, like the barren desert; and
 “ all the slender maidens, like the sun whose glory
 “ is opposed to Jupiter, shall tremble.”

When Hasein had finished, Hatal longed to engage him, but his uncle would not permit him: he returned his feet into the stirrups, and snatching up his spear off the ground, he rushed upon Hasein like a lion darting from the forest, and as he assailed him in a tremendous manner, he thus answered:

“ O Ibla, grieve not for my wound. Rejoice in
 “ the victory of the scimitar of the swarthy youth.
 “ O Ibla, fear not for me the foe, but fill thy eyes with
 “ sleep, and watch not. O Ibla, round thy dwelling in the blackness of the night I am a man
 “ fiercer than the ravenous lion. Check thy complaints,
 “ for thy tears pierce sharper through my entrails
 “ than the barb of the Semherian spear. Wouldst
 “ thou ask the horse of me? O daughter of Malik
 “ (if thou art watching, why dost thou not see me?)
 “ he would tell thee of him who plunges into the
 “ dust, and that I have dispersed the whole army
 “ on my Aljer. I have scattered afar the tribe of
 “ Fazarah over the wastes, trembling through fear
 “ of Antar. As to the heroes of the age, I will an-

“nihilate them with the sword, and the lance, and
“the spear. Pride not thyself, thou coward-born,
“on my wound; thou wouldst say, thou hadst
“given a rock-bound veil. Verily the wound of a
“hero is in the face, but thy wound in the day of
“battle is in thy back. I am the son of Shedad,
“whose fame is on high, mounting till it approaches
“the sphere of Jupiter.”

Antar shouted at Hasein, and rushed onward. Hasein was filled with exultation when he saw the bandages on Antar's head; so he thought that he would soon fall within his grasp. But as Antar made that assault he was aghast and stupefied, and repented of having ventured against him; yet no longer able to fly, he began to engage Antar, and charged him. Mocri-ul-wahsh could not view this event with indifference. This tribe of Fazarah is a treacherous tribe, said he, as he resolved to attack Antar; but he saw him a mountain, mountains could not overpower, and a sea visited by no calm, and a measure for which there was no standard. Antar continued to engage Hasein till he had fatigued and tired him; he closed on him, and hemmed him in, and stopping every means of escape, he stood up on his stirrups, and stretching out on his saddle, he struck at Hasein with Dhami between the eyes. Hasein received the blow on his shield, but Antar's sword split it in two, even dividing his helmet in twain, and continuing its course down between the thighs even through the belly of the horse down into the ground, and Hasein and his horse

fell cleft in four parts, and Antar cried out, O by Abs! I will not be controlled. I am the lover of Ibla, I will not be restrained! Numan's armies were startled; the Fazareans were eager to assault him, but Numan's satraps ordering them back, out started Mocri-ul-wahsh between the ranks, and he appeared in front of the two armies, till standing in the presence of Antar: Eh! O Antar, he cried, by the truth of the Messiah, my compassion for thee and thy tribe induces me to save you from death and total extirpation, for ye are indeed the horsemen of death; but ye have destroyed yourselves by incurring the hostility of King Numan, which you cannot possibly resist. It is my opinion you should surrender yourself to me immediately, and I will swear to you by the cross to engage Numan's protection: I will receive you as my friend and companion for ever and ever. Trouble not yourself to fight with me now you are in such a condition. Return in order to bring about an amicable arrangement, so that you may not be talked of, and your glory defaced amongst men, and let not your foes and enemies exult over you. Eh! thou son of a cuckold, cried Antar, away with thy nonsense. What! shall I surrender myself to thee without fighting? I, whom the lions of the forest dread? Come on; on to the plain, that I may tear out such absurdities from thy brain. As he spoke, he shouted at Mocri-ul-wahsh, and rushed upon him; but he also received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. Now these two

giants met like two ferocious lions, and sent forth hideous yells that seared their horses' ears; the limbs of their warriors quaked with horror, and those present imagined the very heavens were rent asunder, and that the day of judgment was at hand; the mountains were convulsed, and the earth trembled. After these shouts, they dashed against each other like butting rams; and as they rebounded they wielded their spears, and kept up a fierce contest till the eyeballs of the spectators sickened, and the whole country shook. They exhibited a combat replete with terrors, and every horror was redoubled: they retired; they advanced, ready with the draught of instant death. The two armies were amazed, and widened the scene of battle for their efforts, whilst the heroes charged. They continued in this state, calamitous and terrifying, till the evening came on, when they both separated in security, neither having been able to vanquish his antagonist either in blows or manœuvres. Mocri-ul-wahsh sought his own horsemen, almost at his last gasp at what he had endured in the combat with Antar. Antar also retired, and the bandages of his wound were loosened; the blood trickled down his face, and he returned in a condition not to give pleasure to his friends. The tribe of Abs and Adnan met him with King Cais; they saluted him, and inquired about his adversary. My cousins, said he, he is indeed a valiant knight, and a stout warrior in the contest; but to-morrow, God willing, I will make

it a decided business. And as he dismounted from Abjer, Ibla met him, and stanching the blood, bound up his wound.

As to Mocri-ul-wahsh, he went back to his people, where Hadifah met him. O knight of Syria, said he, grieve not thy heart, for know, wert thou not the paragon of the age, thou wouldst not have returned in safety from the presence of Antar; for, in his life, he never engaged a knight and quitted him without deciding the combat, or accomplishing his hopes. O Hadifah, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, never in my life did I behold a more valiant fellow than that Antar; but to-morrow I will make it a business of certainty. He passed that night vexed and uneasy that he had not succeeded against Antar. It was scarcely morning when he mounted his horse, and the armies of Numan were also ready. Thus too the tribe of Abs and Adnan sought the theatre of war. Antar remained behind, for feeling somewhat tired in the morning, he said to his brother Shiboob, As soon as you see Mocri-ul-wahsh start forth into the plain inform me, that I may sally out to fight him. When the troops were drawn up, Mocri-ul-wahsh appeared on the plain; and as he galloped and charged, challenging to the engagement, he called to mind his beloved Maseeka, and his separation from her, and thus he spoke:

“ Sweet to me is the zephyr, O land of Syria; it
“ is sweet when my disorder afflicts me. Blow, then;
“ perhaps the breath of Maseeka may meet thee,
“ and her breath convert thee into perfume. The

“maiden! musk dwells under her veil, and when
“impregnated with the moisture of her mouth be-
“comes most fragrant. When she moves, the ele-
“gance of her shape waves like the reed agitated
“by the northern breeze. Wert thou to see her
“thou wouldst behold the eye of the fawn, whose
“heart is fluttering at the wolf in the evening. O
“Mocri-ul-wahsh, said she (and I was preparing
“for departure, whilst my tears streamed down my
“cheeks like a river of blood), wilt thou not return?
“My return is at hand, said I: she bade me adieu.
“My heart pants for her society for ever; and
“when she calls on her lover he will answer her. I
“went to King Numan—where is the cloud that
“has not descended on him? I engaged the horse-
“men that were dear to him; I returned, and my
“spear was dyed in blood. He gave me property,
“and camels, and presents: the gift was noble—
“noble was the donor. He sent me with his armies
“against a knight whom all knights acknowledge;
“and he is generous. I have engaged him with
“the spear-thrust; then I knew him. I had
“wronged him, but excellence is in him. I strug-
“gled with him in the contest and in the plain; I
“saw in him most wonderful deeds: but if this day
“I destroy not their support with my sword, my
“heart will not be glad in the enjoyment of my
“beloved.”

Mocri-ul-wahsh had not finished his verses when
Hatal stood before him, for Antar had staid behind,
and his heart was wearied with passion. Youth,

cried Mocri-ul-wahsh, where is Antar the great? If his wounds prevent him from mounting, he is not to be blamed. I gave him a lesson yesterday, and have rendered him unequal to the fight. Let him not be brow-beaten by me, but let him mount with me the road of ignominy. Eh! shall he acknowledge himself disqualified from fighting thee? said Hatal. Thy death is at hand; and as to what thou sayest about his not coming forth against thee, that is out of contempt for thee and thy like. I adjured him by the most serious of oaths to permit me to sally forth to the contest; so come on, fight! and he shouted at Mocri-ul-wahsh, thus reciting:

“The breeze, O land of Hijaz, is fragrant to me;
“blow then in the face of my amorous adversary.
“Tell Mocri-ul-wahsh to return in safety home, or
“he will return spoiled. If Maseeka be thy final
“object and desire, how has fortune cast thee af-
“flicted amongst us? Thou speakest and repeatest
“her beauties and charms, and on that point thou
“art in distress. O my friend, sing to me of the
“fame of chieftains; talk not to me of every rose-
“bud and perfume. The sighs of love are a dis-
“grace among men, particularly when wars are ac-
“cumulated upon thee. If thou art indeed sick
“with love, the sword of my maternal uncle is a
“doctor and a physician. How many noble horse-
“men like thee has he sought, and they have re-
“mained dyed in the gore of wounds! Let not his
“wound over the face inspirit thee; it was fate,
“whose changes are ever predestined. He is the

“lion of every sand-hill and battle; he is the
“greatest of heroes and princes. Antar, my uncle,
“is the bravest of men, the most valiant of all the
“dwellers on earth without contradiction.”

The knight of Syria was highly incensed: Thou art, then, said he, the son of the sister of that Antar, that black cuckold! and he rushed at him, and addressed him:

“Thou hast abused me for my weakness, thou
“foulest Arab; thou art a coward, not akin to war.
“The Absian Antar is linked to Ibla, and through
“love of her a flame blazes in his heart. A man in-
“deed weeps for the loss of his life, and mourns and
“laments at the loss of his love. Who am I, that
“thou shouldst censure me, son of a dastard! and
“my heart is cauterised with absence, and opposi-
“tion, and anguish. By the truth of the Messiah,
“the purest of every living thing, who created a
“bird out of clay with his miraculous breath, and
“recalled life into the corpse when it was shrouded
“and delivered to the bowels of the grave deprived
“of life, I will stretch ye both on the centre of your
“land, and I will lead your weeping damsels cap-
“tive, and I will cry out with a loud voice in the
“plain of war, Come forth towards me, behold
“wonders in me. If Antar indeed is exhausted
“with the wounds, I must not then annihilate him.
“Let the Arabs laugh him to scorn. I will leave
“the land a desert; and as to its inhabitants, their
“blood shall stream over the country. I will fight
“Antar; then will I dash him to the earth. I will

“ make him drink the cup of death, and bring down
“ perdition upon him.”

Mocri-ul-wahsh having finished, he shouted at Hatal, and resolved to overwhelm him in death, on account of the foul expressions he had addressed to him. Hatal met him, and there ensued between them the contest of spears and swords, that amazed the warriors, and startled the sturdy heroes for two hours. At last exhaustion fell on the shoulders of Hatal, for he was no match for him, nor accounted among his equals. Mocri-ul-wahsh perceiving his situation, determined to destroy him, as he knew Antar was his uncle; again he assailed him, and was about to put an end to him, when lo! a roar that made the mountains shake, and the hollows re-echo, and some one exclaimed, Away, thou knight of Syria, pride not thyself in the slaughter of strip-lings. Turn on one who will speedily give thee thy death and extinction. The warriors awhile considered who could have sent forth that tremendous shout, when lo! it was the noble warrior—the destroyer of stout heroes, Aboolfawaris—the chief Antar, son of Shedad. He delivered Hatal from Mocri-ul-wahsh, and then attacked him. The cause of Antar's coming was Shiboob, who, on seeing Hatal nearly overcome, quitted the field, and informed his brother. Come to thy nephew, Hatal, said he, or Mocri-ul-wahsh will slay him. Bring me Abjer, said Antar, and he sprang from the ground on his back, like an eagle, without putting his foot into the stirrup, and equipped himself in his

armour and his shining corslet. He attacked, and dismissed his nephew from the scene of contention, thus addressing Mocri-ul-wahsh. Eh! thou bastard, wouldst pride thyself in slaying children? As to me, by the faith of a noble Arab, had I enemies as numerous as the sands, like this youth, I'd heed them not. I am he, who will give thee enough of spear-thrusts and sword-blows; for the slaughter of this youth could have been no advantage to thee, neither could the extinction of his name have been any glory to thee. Thou art only come to seek me: come on, then; fight: perhaps thou mayest succeed. Shouldst thou take me a captive or slay me, the tribe of Abs will be unprotected, and from thy sword every calamity may overwhelm them; for when I am no more, there will not be a horseman to contend with thee in all this country. Now be just, and give up all outrage and foul play; and Antar rushed at Mocri-ul-wahsh, thus reciting:

“Hola! O Ibla, arise and behold me; see in me
“truth without guile. Arise, and behold my blow
“and thrust, like a flame, that burns in flashes.
“Mourn not for my wound, it is only like the rent
“in a man's garment. The thrust of man wounds
“not, it is only like the bore in the ear of a woman.
“But if my spear and my sword have sway, the
“skull and heaviest leathern mail are cleft. This
“day thou shalt see the descents of my sword, and
“the thrusts of my spear. Hey! O Mocri-ul-
“wahsh, return thee home, before thou remainest

“emboweled, I will soon relieve the Arabs from thee,
“and truly Maseeka shall remain my wife. I will
“plunder her property and slay her father, and I
“will leave her abode a desert, with my sword.
“My name is well known, east and west, and every
“horseman dreads a contest with me.”

At hearing these verses, Mocri-ul-wahsh was enraged and indignant. Eh! thou coward-born, said he, is it consistent with thy greatness to address me in such language, and I the knight of Syria? and as he rushed upon Antar, he thus spoke:

“Hola! man of wily words, forth to the combat,
“and establish my fortune. Hola! race of Abs,
“ye shall acknowledge me. I am Mocri-ul-wahsh
“over the mountains. Soon will I slay Antar with
“the sword of conquest, and I will leave him dead
“on the sand. I will seize Ibla, and return home,
“and she shall serve my wife as her mistress. I
“will take Numan’s camels, and will, in happy
“mood, return towards Maseeka. I am ever the
“knight of knights, and this day will I consum-
“mate my glory. This day Numan’s armies shall
“route these troops, bewildered and powerless.
“The Arabs shall be left ague-struck at my prowess,
“and truly the warriors have already witnessed it.
“I am the hero of Syria, and of every land, and
“this day my exploits shall be renowned.”

He had no sooner finished, than Antar shouted and rushed upon him; and they began a contest of swords and spears, at which the warriors were confounded, and the valiant heroes cried out, Heaven

protect us ! The blow and the thrust, the struggle and assault, and the draughts of sudden death continued ; their blows anticipated the messengers of death, and their shouts were like the thunder-crash in a cloud. Both combatants were nearly dead. Mocri-ul-wahsh was stupefied at Antar's prowess, and repented. Still he exhibited all his steadiness, and concealed the anguish and regret he felt. They persisted in these perils and horrors till the day departed : they were tired and exhausted ; but debility had fallen on the shoulders of Mocri-ul-wahsh, for Antar had wounded him in two places. He desisted from the fight, and requested Antar to stop. No, said Antar, by the truth of Him who firmly rooted the mountains, there is no termination for thee but in success and the approach of death. He was aghast, and shuddered. O Aboolfawaris, he added, no one can resist my thrusts but you ; but you have wronged me in breaking my spear : all I ask of you is to wait for me, whilst I repair to my party and take another spear ; then will I return to you, and will not separate from you, till the affair be decided. I'll not let thee stir, continued Antar, and he assailed him, and recommenced the contest. But the troops crowded upon them, and drew their swords round them, each party forming conjectures of its lord. They continued in this state till midnight. Mocri-ul-wahsh felt assured of destruction, and knowing that Antar would not quit him but in death, he slackened his mare's bridle and fled, launching into the waste and desert. Eh ! O Ebe

Reeah, cried out Antar to Shiboob, overtake him before he roams wide over the waste: and Shiboob let out his feet. Antar followed him, and they were cut off from the army. In the meantime, Hadifah (that man of deceit and guile), as soon as the sound of Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh was far distant from the scene of contention, cried out to his tribe and the surrounding horsemen, Come on, come on, now relieve the mind of the lord of empire, King Numan. Now cut off that black wittol, Antar. Thus the tribe of Fazarah outraged the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and attacked them on all quarters. The Absians shouted at the Fazareans, and descended upon them like a fall of rain under the night. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood flowed and streamed—limbs were hacked off—men were knocked down on the plain—the armies of Numan also attacked—the mountains and the deserts were agitated, till brother knew not brother, and son recognised not his father. They continued plundering each others lives from the beginning of the night till the white streak of the dawn brightened, when every friend knew his comrade, and the foe was distinguished from the ally. King Cais looked round, north and south, but saw nothing of Antar. He was amazed and alarmed. The armies had occupied every road against them, and raised shouts at them in every direction. Apprehensive that the Absians would be dispersed over the barren waste, he had no other measure to adopt, but to cry out to them, O cousins, follow me to the sand-hills, and Mount

Saadi ; it is impossible any longer to resist the shock of these armies. At hearing this, they followed him, abandoning their property and their families ; and they assembled on the top of the sand-hill and Mount Saadi. The troops assaulted their tents, and plundered their property, and captured their wives and families ; even captivity fell on the families of King Cais, and Modelilah, and Jemanah, and Ibla, and Sherehah, and Semiah were taken prisoners. Above all the women, most poignant was the grief and anguish of Ibla, Malik's daughter. The Arabs of Yemen threw down the dwellings of the Absians to their very foundations, and did not leave them the value of a halter, for some of them loaded their horses, and each person, too, carried away a horse-load besides ; and in less than an hour they left the country a waste, and set out for the deserts and sand-hills ; whilst the Absians remained looking at their wives driven away in bondage. No good can ever visit us now, said they to Cais, not a head will be raised up towards us, now that our wives and families are enslaved. O cousins, replied Cais, I had only recourse to this act, as I knew you were unable to continue the combat. Behold our property and our families driven away by the foe ; come on now with me. And King Cais bared his head and made the attack ; the Absians did the same ; they precipitated themselves from the mountain-top, crying out, O by Abs ! O by Adnan ! and rushed down upon the armies of Numan. This was the calamitous and desperate state of the Absians, when

said Amarah to Rebia, Let us make our attack in the direction where Ibla is; perhaps we may rescue her from captivity and infamy, and love for Amarah, to the exclusion of other horsemen, infuse itself into her heart. Thou poltroon, thou driveller, said Rebia, dost not see thy mother and thy sister and thy brothers' wives are all prisoners, and that our property is pillaged, and that we are degraded before the world? By the faith of a generous Arab, were Antar but present in the contest, not one of all these disasters would have befallen us. It happened that Haml, son of Beder, had taken King Cais's mother, Temadhur, prisoner, and conducted her to a valley. Eh! son of Beder, cried Temadhur, for what purpose hast thou brought me down to this valley? That the Arabs may indulge foul suspicions of me? And that our hearts be pained and never at rest? My purpose, said Haml, is to ravish thee, and murder thy children on thy bosom. At this, death became easy to Temadhur. Alas! alas! she cried, woe to the small number of horsemen! On thee, O Cais, and thy brothers, be thy mother's blessing! At the word, she threw herself off the camel on the ground; she fell on her head, and her neck was broken; she instantly expired, whilst her maidens wept around her. During all this, the Absians were in the fiercest of the carnage, and the hottest of the combat of spears and swords: nearly destroyed and annihilated, they had resolved either to fly and seek the desert, or demand quarter and surrender themselves to King Numan, when lo! shouts arose in

front of the armies, and yells that convulsed the neighbouring wilds. King Cais and his warriors stopped awhile in suspense, conjecturing whence could issue these tremendous sounds. At that instant, the chief Antar, the generous hero, started forth in front of King Numan's army, and repulsed them over the wilderness; and with him was Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria, fighting by Antar's side, and dealing blows like descending thunderbolts. The souls of the Absians revived, and their spirits recovered. Hey! cousins, said King Cais, here is our champion, Antar, and Mocri-ul-wahsh is our friend. Now, then, take courage for retaliation, and remove away your disgrace, and he who takes not kindly to the fight is no legitimate-born. Upon this, all the fire of the Absians was roused, and they returned to the combat of the foe, like tall sea-monsters. When Numan's armies beheld Antar return safe, and Mocri-ul-wahsh in his company, dealing blows Davidian corslets could not repel, and Shiboob occupying the way before them, they saw no expedient but in flight and escape; so they threw away all their booty, and lanced into the wilds and the wastes.

As soon as Mocri-ul-wahsh fled, under the night, Shiboob shot forth in pursuit of him, followed by Antar, and they continued to drive him over the desert, till morning dawned, when Mocri-ul-wahsh perceiving his life was in imminent danger, and that he could not escape, halted at once, saying, O Arab, thou wilt kill me, and thou hast destroyed thyself with fatigue.

I have no property to plunder, neither hast thou any retaliation to demand of me; neither can thy heart harbour any resentment against me. I never insulted thy cousin Ibla. I have nothing with me but my horse and my arms, that are dearer to me than life. Take them and forgive me, Aboolfawaris. I covet not thy mare, said Antar, my only object is to take thy life; for thou appearest a brave fellow and a valiant knight. Then will I return to these troops, and will not permit the first of them to join the last. O Aboolfawaris, continued Mocri-ul-wahsh, now I am aware that I was a fool among horsemen; never henceforward will I mount a stallion; never again will I be present in a battle, but I will seek the church of Bekhran, there to settle among the hermits, and I will renounce my projects on my bride Maseeka, daughter of the King of Hooran. O Mocri-ul-wahsh, said Antar, if such be thy story, I will wipe away that trouble from thy heart; I will go with thee to the land of Syria, and will seize thy bride for thee, were she even on the back of the clouds. O Aboolfawaris, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, all my hopes are centered in thee, that thou wouldst accept me as thy horseman, and receive me as thy slave. I will be thy ally in all thy calamities; and he dismounted from the back of his mare and hastened towards Antar, and kissed his feet in the stirrup. Antar also jumped off his Abjer; he embraced Mocri-ul-wahsh, and kissed him between the eyes, and having both vowed to preserve a mutual affection, and to plunder and spoil the

generous Arabs together, they mounted and returned, as we described, and attacked the armies as we mentioned. This therefore was the cause of the friendship of Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh, and now let us return to our original story.

After the flight of Numan's forces, King Cais went up to Antar, and kissed him between the eyes. The Absians also being collected, they searched for their property and families, and they found Temadhur dead, and her damsels round her. On King Cais's demanding, who did this deed? they told him Haml, son of Beder. The light became dark in the eyes of the sons of Zoheir, and they swore they would not leave the Fazareans a tent to shelter them; not even a man to blow a fire. King Cais ordered the Absians to collect the property and return to the dwellings, whilst he mounted with half his warriors, and took to the right hand road, saying to Antar, Cousin, take thou the other half, and go the left, for I know the Fazarean horse must be somewhere here, and I should say they have not quitted the well of Hebat, and have not yet entered the wilds and the wastes. Antar acquiesced in King Cais's orders, and departed in company with Mocri-ul-wahsh, and the family of Carad. King Cais also departed, and as he wept for his mother, he thus recited :

“ Alas! O eyes, weep torrents this day, over my cheeks copiously, and abundantly. Alas! O eyes, weep with me for Zoheir, and his son Malik; now their glory is past. Alas! O eyes, announce

“ their death in agonies of grief; the heart cannot
“ longer bear it. Alas! O eyes, weep the loss of
“ Shas, but yesterday reduced to dust after all his
“ greatness. Calamities beguiled them; misfortune
“ overwhelmed them; violence destroyed them.
“ Ah! O race of Beder, ye have done a deed of
“ universally acknowledged outrage in the murder
“ of my mother; ye imagined ye would this day
“ escape, and would be excited with glory and
“ happiness; but the revolutions of death shall
“ requite ye; we will come upon ye openly with
“ our swords. Antar will come upon ye; he lusts
“ to meet ye, were ye even far distant from him over
“ the waste; were even the Emperor of Rome and
“ Greece with ye, or the inhabitants of Syria and of
“ verdant Europe. Were ye to come with all the
“ dwellers on earth; were even Chosroe, King of
“ Persia, to come with ye, we will meet ye with our
“ sharp-edged scimitars, on our well-trained roan
“ steeds. Sons of Beder! verily ye have outraged
“ us, but we would have abandoned the contest.
“ Cousins, this was not my intention; it was not
“ in my heart, that this war should take place. It
“ was ye that commenced; this calamity and op-
“ pression ever originated in ye. Alas! alas! my
“ grief for thee, O Temadhur! that accursed Haml,
“ son of Beder, murdered thee. Soon will I extir-
“ pate them all with my avenging sword; I will
“ make their blood flow like a sea; I will retaliate
“ on them, and they shall remain a tale for ages, as
“ long as the world endures.”

Having finished his verses, he went on till being at some distance from that land, he beheld the impression of Ghabra's hoof, Hadifah's mare; for when he fled with the tribe of Fazarah, the girths of his horse being loose, he dismounted, and tightened them; and the impression of Hadifah's feet remained also by the side of his mare's. King Cais recognised the impression.

Now Hadifah in his flight galloped on till he came to the well of Hebat. He had a son named Husn, who was at that time along with him, and he was a rare child. Hadifah pressed him to his bosom, and kissed him between the eyes, saying, O Husn, this is the kiss of farewell. My sole request of you, my son, is this; if you die after me, and have power over the Absians, murder their infants, enslave their women and families; let not a vestige remain of them; and know, O my son, that I am quitting this world, and have no other regret in my heart, but that fortune gave me not the means to exterminate their warriors, to enslave their wives and families, and to destroy their land and country. Thus saying, he threw himself down by the side of the well, with his warrior companions; and they were insensible to every thing till King Cais and his companions encompassed them.

Hadifah started up with the Fazareans; they attempted to mount their horses and fly, when lo! Antar and the Carad horsemen rushed between them and their steeds, then seized them all, and pinioned them. Antar and his companions retired to a different quarter, whilst King Cais advancing

with his brothers, cried out, Ah ! ye sons of Beder, how oft have I had mercy on you, but you have ever betrayed me ! How oft have I believed you, but you have falsified yourselves ! I should like to see who will this day rescue you from death. Who will avert from you our cleaving sabres, and our sparkling spears ? As to thee, Hadifah, remember what thy hands have done : may God curse thy father and thy mother ! Remember the murder of the infants with thy arrows. As to thee, Haml, remember thy words to my mother—" My purpose is to ravish thee, and assassinate thy children on thy bosom."

On hearing this, Hadifah turned towards Cais, saying, Eh ! son of Zoheir, why dost thou upbraid me with thy words ? Cease these reproaches and reproofs, for I, by the faith of an Arab, had I sworn to thee a thousand times a day, I would have betrayed thee ; and had I been able to murder thee, and murder thy brothers, never would I have pardoned. Now then do as thou listeth, act as thou wilt ; leave not one of us to root out thy every vestige. As to me, before thou camest, I had proposed that we should slay each other ; for we covet not life, whilst thou art on the face of the earth. But O my cousins, by the consanguinity of wombs that exists between us, do not bring us face to face—to confront each other is hard indeed : to catch each other's eye at such an hour is the severest of pangs. And Hadifah hung his head towards the ground,

and wept. Retaliation for children ! cried Cais :
come on, cousins, retaliate !

At the word, his brother Harith dismounted from his horse, and pierced Hadifah with his spear through the back, and the barb issued glittering through his bosom. He cut off his head, and remounted his horse, exclaiming, O retaliation for Malik ! and thus he spoke :

“ Dig up the grave of our brother ; let him see
“ our exploits, when we grieve no more. O that
“ the earth were riven over him, that Malik might
“ see the deeds of men. We have left the chiefs
“ of Beder at Hebat, spouting out death at our
“ spear points. Hadifah and Haml, sons of Beder
“ and Jabir, with Yezid and Betal, them have we
“ left dead round the well, slain by our sharp In-
“ dian blades. We have slaughtered them, but it
“ was a cruel day to us, when death sped from
“ their arrows. They were the chieftains of men
“ wherever they went, and the lions of war in every
“ combat. They wronged us, and perfidy leaves
“ every land a desert, deprived of its inhabitants.”

When Rebia saw what Harith, son of Zoheir, had done, he also dismounted, and crying out, O for retaliation for my brother Talib ! he pierced Haml with his spear between the shoulders, and drove it out through his paps : then he pounced upon him, and cut off his head, and thus spoke :

“ We have made the chiefs of Beder drink of the
“ cups of death with sword and spear at Hebat.

“ We have encircled them with calamities, and they
“ staggered over the plain, but not intoxicated with
“ wine. In power they were the most puissant of
“ the two tribes, and in every undertaking their
“ resolution was abundant. When they mounted
“ their generous steeds, their horses stirred up the
“ dusty cloud in every desert. When they even gave
“ away a little in their bounty, the country was filled
“ with the land and sea of their liberality. Had
“ they no heirs, I should ever weep at what has
“ befallen them for their iniquity. But the youth
“ Haml, son of Beder, betrayed us, and treachery
“ roots out every recollection. How oft I warned
“ them, but they sinned again, and they have died
“ against my will. Fortune beguiled them; they
“ deceived us; but the revolutions of fortune de-
“ ceive every one. We are the losers by what we
“ have done. Alas! alas! to the sons of Beder!
“ By destroying their horsemen, we have cut off our
“ support, but I have eased the anguish of my heart
“ among them.”

When Rebia had finished his verses, the retaliators followed him, and cut off the heads of the tribe of Fazarah, and left them convulsed in death on the banks of the well. King Cais observed the catastrophe, and his heart was appeased, till he repented of having slaughtered them, for they were his cousins. He wept bitterly over them, and at their miseries in the wild and waste, and thus he mourned their death:

“ Truly the day of Hebat has brought evil upon

“ us, and the oppressor has become the oppressed.
“ This is the day of my losing the chiefs of the sons
“ of Beder, and they were stars in the eyes of all
“ beholders. I slew them because they wronged
“ me, and for their former perfidy. They smote
“ Dahis, and he was a generous steed: they murdered
“ Malik, and he was a noble youth. I have
“ slain them all, and I have assuaged the fire of my
“ heart; but still the poisonous blast will increase it.
“ O that before I had slain them, I had been slain,
“ or had lost all my sense of joy. By their perfidy,
“ they injured us: we have oppressed the whole
“ body, but their day was fixed by fate. My anguish
“ increased when I heard their cries, and
“ when we are no more, who will defend our
“ women*?”

When King Cais had finished his verses, the Absians shed torrents of tears. Just then, Husn, son of Hadifah, presented himself to the King, and kissed the ground. Then drawing his sword, he surrendered it to Cais, and wept as he stood before him, saying, If it will appease thy heart, slaughter me thyself. But King Cais burst into tears, and said, O Husn, hadst thou done this before, I should have stretched out my hand against thee, but the business has been pushed too far already. Thou shalt lord over these people in the place of thy father; I will protect thee, and respect thee.

* The destruction of this family at the well of Hebat is mentioned by Abulfeda.

And King Cais remained there that night till the morning lustre shone, when he set out for the land of Abs. But they had scarcely left that spot, when lo! a dust arose. See, what means this dust? cried Cais. The horsemen moved on, and returning, informed him that it was the dust of the women of Fazarah, with their daughters and infants, who were coming to take retaliation for their husbands. They are right, said Cais, for we have tortured them in their husbands. But turning towards Husn, he added, O my son, keep them off; let them bury their dead, and let them demand the aid of God in their distresses. Upon this Husn returned, and sent away the women, whilst King Cais continued his journey home, full of woe and anguish, and thus he gave vent to his sorrows:

“ I am returning, but the sleep of my eyes will
“ torment me. My resolution is diminished; my
“ courage is languid, at what the sons of Beder, son
“ of Amroo, have suffered of infamy at the well of
“ Hebat. We have tainted the water with the
“ blood of the tribe, and its colour has appeared
“ like the Judas tree. I have appeased my spirit
“ on Haml, son of Beder, and my sword has as-
“ suaged me on Hadifah. They were of our fa-
“ mily, but they acted perfidiously to us, and the
“ perfidy of relatives can never be forgiven. They
“ excited the war of enmity and aggression in the
“ horse-race; on the day of the match they were
“ obstinate in their hostility to us. So they have
“ suffered as the family of Abdul Modan suffered.

“ Had they asked for mercy, I should have forgiven
“ them ; but they persisted, and their death was at
“ hand. Though I have relieved my anguish with
“ them, still I have cut off my own support, and
“ my own strength.”

As King Cais spoke, tears streamed from the eyes of all the warriors. They continued their journey till they reached the dwellings, and alighted at the tents ; and when they were quietly established, the warriors came to King Cais to condole with him about the tribe of Fazarah, and to congratulate him on his victory and triumph for seven days.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON the eighth day came Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh unto Cais, accompanied by the Absian chieftains. O King, said they, how long these tears, and this affliction? The catastrophe of thy foes proceeds from thy good fortune. It is over: it is now incumbent on thee to make feasts and entertainments, and take advantage of this period of festivity.

Thus they continued till they made him drink some wine; and on the second day he gave a magnificent feast at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, where the whole tribe of Abs was collected; and when they had eaten, the wine was brought to them, and they conversed about their battles, commemorating their victories. O my cousins, said King Cais, that was our severest day, when we engaged the tribe of Fazarah; for on that day also drew near the armies of King Numan, with Mocri-ul-wahsh, the Knight of Syria, and no one relieved us from disasters, but our cousin Antar, and Mocri-ul-wahsh, on the day he became Antar's friend; for then he performed deeds to be recorded. Mocri-ul-wahsh, on hearing this, started on his legs, and kissing the King's hand, O King, said he, I used formerly to reckon myself amongst the valiant in war, and in the charge, till I was overpowered by this swarthy knight, and this

lion of death; but when I tasted of his combat, I knew my opinion of horsemen was false, and that I was a fool among the brave; for bravery is divided into two sorts: the first belongs to all mankind, the second is exclusively Antar's.

Antar sprang up, and kissing him between the eyes, exclaimed, Witness for me, ye chiefs of Abs and Adnan, and all ye here present, that I am for ever the slave of this hero, and all the wealth and property my power shall obtain shall be made over to him; let no one interfere on this point, and verily, I have engaged on my existence, that I will effect his union with his bride Maseeka, daughter of the King of Hooran. To-morrow will I commence this undertaking; for ye all know, that I ever assist the union of absent lovers, and how anxious I am to relieve the afflictions of those who sigh for each other; thus, perhaps, the Lord Creator may facilitate my business; but I do not speak thus in the way of complaint or opposition to fate; for that time will come, sooner or later, either by death or by a meeting and realization of hopes. And as he spoke, he wept. When Malik, his uncle, beheld his grief, O son of my brother, he cried, running towards him in the excess of his malice and guile, by the faith of an Arab, were I not afraid of interrupting the feast, I would wed my daughter, Ibla, to thee before to-morrow. But when the feasts of King Cais are concluded, we will consult about our affairs, and the cup of joys shall draw nigh. Thou knowest, O Aboulfawaris, thou art our protector in every peril,

and from every foe. Moreover, we would have already terminated this business, and consummated all thy hopes, had it not been for the arrival of King Numan's troops, and the convulsions of the times. But now our troubles are removed from us, and by thy sword every opponent, every enemy, has been put to death, and there remains no one, black or white, to thwart our wishes. No! no! exclaimed King Cais, turning towards him, these excuses I will no longer admit or endure. As he spoke, he gave the cup to his wine-bearer, adding, listen to the words I now say. O Wine-bearer! lock up this cup, and keep it, for, by the faith of an Arab, I will not again drink of wine, or interest myself in any one affair, till my cousin, Antar, be wedded unto his cousin, and his affliction be removed. All the he and she camels I possess shall be supplied for seven days, as also fodder for the horses. Arise this moment, he added, addressing Malik, and prepare thy daughter. Malik quitted the presence of King Cais, expressing his obedience and submission; and the whole assembly dispersed, Antar's friends rejoicing, and his enemies sorrowing. When the family of Carad heard of Ibla's marriage, they were delighted, men and women, daughters and sons; they commenced their merry-making and joys, and grief was banished. Malik knew not what to do, and he felt aware his perfidy and machinations could avail him nought; for should he resist, the morrow would see him dead; so he repaired to his wife. Mother of Amroo, said he, prepare for thy

daughter's wedding, for she, in a few days, will be married to her cousin, Antar. I verily blush before him, for he has acted so generously towards us; but I have requited him with evil, and particularly at this time, when he has repulsed King Numan's armies; for had it not been for Antar's sword, we should all have been dispersed over the wilds and the wastes. When Ibla's mother heard this from her husband, she rejoiced on her daughter's account, for she loved Antar exceedingly for his intrepidity and superior excellence; she was, moreover, convinced that Ibla could suit no one but Antar, for he alone could protect her. Bring Antar to me, said Malik to his son. Amroo went forth and told Antar his father wanted him. So Antar sprang up and put on his finest clothes, and departing with Amroo, presented himself to his uncle, who arose and embraced him, treating him with great distinction, and saying, Nephew, invite thy friends, and thy comrades, and thy associates, that we may prepare thy wedding, and accomplish thy wishes. At these expressions, Antar's bosom dilated, and he was full of joy. He instantly started forth, and returning home, sent for Oorwah. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said Antar, my uncle has consented to my marriage, and has directed me to invite my friends and confederates, and in three days he will acquiesce in my desires, but I would put it off for ten days. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, take advantage of the opportunity, and let our hearts be relieved of this anxiety. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, continued Antar, I

wish to send to all my friends, as I fear they may otherwise reproach us, particularly the chief Bostam ; for he suffered much with us, in the affairs of the Kendehans. The least, said Oorwah, that you can wish to slaughter on your marriage, will be ten thousand he and she camels, for thy guests will be numerous. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said Antar, ten thousand shall not suffice for the slaves alone ; the least that I shall slaughter will be twenty thousand she camels, and twenty thousand he camels ; twenty thousand sheep, and twenty thousand goats, and a thousand lions, for my guests will be many. I wish to make at Ibla's wedding five separate feasts ; I will feed the birds and the beasts, the men and the women, the girls and boys, and not a single person shall remain in the whole country but shall eat at Ibla's marriage festival. Well, do as you please, Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah. Now write, added Antar, to the chief Bostam, a letter, with my good wishes, to request his company, with all the warriors of the tribe of Shiban ; and a second to Hassan, the Mazinite ; and a third to the chief Hajar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan ; and a fourth to Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian ; and a fifth to the chief Moshajaa, son of Hosan, the Khoolamian ; and a sixth to King Niamet, son of Ashtar, lord of the land of Sawdah, and the volcano mountain. Thus he wrote numerous letters to all the Arab tribes, and the number of letters he despatched to the tribes was three hundred and sixty, to the three hundred and sixty tribes of Arabs of the

cultivated and uncultivated plains ; and whilst he was making preparations, O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, I wish you would go to the land of Syria, and procure some wine for us. Oorwah expressed his obedience, and mounting with his men, set out for the land of Syria, till he reached Azeilem, now called Mazeireeb, where he staid with his people, expecting the wine merchants. As to King Cais, he ordered his slaves to bring forth his tents, and pitch the canopies and standards, and thus the whole tribe of Abs exhibited all their riches ; and it was a wonderful day in the display of the quantity of different coloured tents and decorated dwellings. The tents for the men were put on one side ; on the other were the tents for the women ; and they felt secure from the night depredators of the time, and the revolutions of events. Antar was at the summit of his happiness and delight, congratulating himself on his good fortune and perfect felicity, all trouble and anxiety being now banished from his heart, Praise be to God, the dispenser of all grief from the hearts of virtuous men ! Antar every day mounted his horse, and roamed over the mountains and the hollows, hunting lions and tigers, till he had taken seven hundred lions and two hundred tigers, which he secured in a valley, and he stationed a number of slaves over them to feed them. He then exhibited the pavilion which he had brought with him from Chosroe, and ordered his slaves to pitch it for Ibla ; and when spread out, it occupied half the land of Shurebah, for it was the load of forty camels ; and

there was an awning at the door of the pavilion, under which four thousand of the Absian horse could skirmish. It was embroidered with burnished gold, studded with precious stones and diamonds, interspersed with rubies, and emeralds set with rows of pearls, and there was painted thereon a specimen of every created thing, birds, and trees, and towns, and cities, and seas, and continents, and beasts, and reptiles; and whoever looked at it was confounded by the variety of the representations, and by the brilliancy of the silver and gold; and so magnificent was the whole, that when the pavilion was pitched, the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi were illuminated by its splendor. The Absians produced their richest stores; in short, the dwellings appeared like a flower-garden; the whole country was in agitation; and the sun shone with reflected rays. The happiest of all, at Antar's marriage-feast, were King Cais and his brothers, and also the family of Carad; for these days were like so many holidays to them. As to the family of Zecad, their hearts were bursting. Oorwah was not absent more than three days, and on the fourth day he appeared, and with him abundance of wine; and whilst they were in this state, behold, some she camels advanced, and he camels came forward from the valleys and the mountains, amounting to sixty thousand she camels, and sixty thousand he camels; and Antar ordered Shiboob to conduct three thousand of them to the mountains, there to slaughter them, and skin them, and feed the birds. Shiboob obeyed,

and went to the mountains, where he slaughtered the camels; and as the slaves flayed them of their hides, Shiboob ascended the highest mountain, and cried out in a loud voice, O ye birds of prey, ye vultures of death! come down and eat of Antar's marriage-feast; he this day invites ye all. The next day, he took two thousand more, and slaughtered them on the mountain-tops, crying out, O ye voracious lions, ye mighty tigers, all of ye come down and eat of the marriage-feast of Antar, son of Shedad, for he this day invites ye all. After this, Antar ordered the butchers to slaughter he and she camels, and sheep, and fattened deer, and to prepare every species of viand, and to make the wine to flow, and to decorate the dwellings of his guests and friends for four days, when lo! there appeared a dust. Antar and the Absians mounted to meet it, and the dust opened and discovered the chief Bostam, accompanied by a thousand horsemen of the tribe of Shiban. Antar saluted him and his comrades, and conducted them to a magnificent tent, and they presented them meat of the flesh of sheep and deer. The next day, also, was seen advancing towards them a cloud of dust, which the Absians went out to meet, when lo! it discovered Hassan the Mazinite, Prince Malik's foster brother, and in his rear were seven thousand horsemen, all mailed and armed. Antar received them, and conducted them to a magnificent tent, supplying them abundantly with meat and wine. They reposed till morning, when lo! a dust again arose: Antar and

the Absians went out to meet it, and Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, appeared, accompanied with nine thousand horsemen of the tribes of Zebeed, Khitaam, and Morad. Antar received and accommodated them with a superb dwelling : he treated them most hospitably, and supplied them with abundance of wine. They passed a night of joy and festivity ; and in the morning there appeared another dust, and it discovered a knight close-visored and perfectly formed. The warriors marked him, and behold it was the chief Hajar, son of Aamir, the Kendehean, accompanied with eight thousand heroes of Kendehe, all famed for their bravery and firmness. The Absians and Antar received them, and saluting them, conducted them to a magnificent mansion, and presented them meat and wine, paying them every attention. On the next day there was seen another dust, and it cleared away from the chief Moshajaa, son of Hosan, the Khoolanian, attended by seven thousand horsemen of the tribe of Khoolan. The tribe of Abs and Adnan received him, and made him alight at a splendid tent, overwhelming them with meat and wine. Antar was delighted at their arrival, and treated them all with distinguished hospitality. The Absians continued in this state of mirth and merriment, receiving in succession all the Arab tribes of Adnan and Cahtan. (Were I to write down, says Asmaee, all the Arab tribes that assisted at Antar's nuptials, the tongue would fail, and the hearer be wearied, and the book be filled ; so we have abridged the account.)

The Arabs continued to flock into the land of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, till the wilderness and desert were crammed, as also the mountains and sand-hills. Praise be to God, the enricher of mankind ! Antar ordered the butchers to slaughter night and day, and the cooks to cook day and night, and the slaves to prepare bread and pastry : and all the tribe of Abs stood waiting in attendance on the Arab chiefs, and inhabitants of the wilds and wastes, even to King Caia himself and all his brothers. There were reckoned, by one who was present at Antar's marriage, one hundred and forty-five thousand warriors, lords of the sword-blow and spear-thrust ; and the total of those who were present, men and women, amounted to three hundred thousand. Power is with the only God, great and munificent ! On this account, Antar's wedding was known far and wide in those days ; and when these tribes were assembled, the country was too confined for them ; so that brother could not see his brother, nor son distinguish where stood his father. Antar ordered the chamberlains to spread carpets, that the victuals might not spoil, and that they might eat walking, eat standing, eat on horseback, eat sitting, and eat in their sleep : and there was not one but was satisfied with every variety of meat. (Whereas, says Asmaee, I was at Mecca when I heard of Antar's nuptials ; I hastened to the land of Shurebah, that I might be an eye-witness, and write down what I saw ; and when I arrived, I perceived an infinity of things that had never been mentioned

before; and I reckoned that Antar had expended in barley, and wheat, and millet, and other grain, seven hundred and seventy Irdebbs*.)

They thus continued in constant enjoyment: the horsemen every morning mounted their steeds, flourishing their arms and tilting on the plains, till the heat became too powerful, when they returned to the tents, where they found provisions prepared, minced meats served up, and victuals all ready and cooked. They ate, and the wine-bearers supplied them with generous old wine; and thus they went on seven days and nights. On the eighth day, the chief Bostam sprang up on his legs, and kissing the ground before Antar, presented him the presents he had brought with him, consisting of one hundred of the finest horses, with their accoutrements and armour; fifty balls of the most fragrant musk; fifty dishes of ambergris, and a hundred chains of the purest gold; a hundred robes of velvet, two thousand she camels, and two thousand he camels, with one hundred female slaves; and thus he addressed him:

“ May heroes rejoice in the continuance of thy
 “ glory, and the noble witness the abundance of thy
 “ greatness! may every day be renewed to thee in
 “ life, and every joy be in its return more plentiful!
 “ Thine is a palm for mankind, that gives comfort
 “ with wealth, and every bounty; thy hand is well

* One Irdebb is equal to fifteen bushels.

“ known, and its celebrated munificence testifies it.
“ May the generosity of thy right hand never fail,
“ as my heart will never fail in its love for thee :
“ may this wedding be propitious to thee amongst
“ men. O knight of knights, and of noble heroes,
“ accept the presents of one most grateful to thee.
“ O Aboolfawaris, thou most merciful of warriors,
“ mayest thou never fail in thy beneficence ! may
“ thy joys abound to thy gratification, and may thy
“ abundance ever increase.”

Antar accepted his presents, and seated him according to his rank. Then the chief Maadi Kereb advanced, and kissing the ground, presented one thousand she camels, and one thousand he camels ; five hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour ; one hundred robes of crimson silk ; twenty strings of jewels ; twenty dishes of ambergris ; twenty balls of the most precious musk ; one hundred male slaves, and as many female slaves ; and as he requested Antar's acceptance, he thus spoke :

“ This day, its light is illumined by thy nuptials,
“ and the glory of its lustre is raised by thy happy
“ star. O Antar of horsemen, rejoice in the ac-
“ complishment of every hope and wish. The
“ night, whenever thou comest, loses its obscurity ;
“ and the desert, wherever thou art, loses its barren-
“ ness ! Glory, then, above all men, in thy pro-
“ sperity ; all confess thy greatness is their greatness.
“ In thy beneficence accept, my lord, a present

“ from one, whose possessions are all thine. Kindly
“ regard thy slave, who is come to thee, and
“ shouldst thou refuse him, it will prove his ruin.”

Antar thanked him for his verses, and accepting his present, seated him according to his rank. Then came forward the Chief Hidjar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan, and kissing the ground before Antar, he presented one thousand she camels, and two thousand he camels; five hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour; five strings of jewels; one hundred robes of twisted velvet; twenty balls of musk; five thousand sheep; one hundred male slaves, and a hundred female; and thus he spoke:

“ The generosity of all generosity is seen, when
“ thou advancest with a shout; and mankind has
“ proved it at the time thou chargest in the field.
“ Thou art extolled on high, at the moment when
“ every great man, noble as he is, cries out to thee
“ for aid. Thou art celebrated for thy liberality in
“ the eloquence of Persia, for the hand of the most
“ bountiful is found niggardly by thee. Thou art
“ a youth whose every thought, disposition, word,
“ and act are magnificent, in spite of thy malicious
“ foes. Thou art a youth that hast mounted to the
“ summit of praise, lofty as it is; and must bear its
“ accumulated weight, heavy as it is. O Knight of
“ Battle, may thy nuptials be propitious to thee!
“ thou paragon of horsemen, at the moment thou
“ ledest the charge! Accept, I conjure thee, this
“ present from me, and excuse its insufficiency, O
“ my lord and my friend!”

Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his present, seated him according to his rank. Then advanced Hassan, the Mazinite, who kissed the ground, and presented seven hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour; and three thousand he and she camels; two thousand goats, and two thousand sheep; twenty velvet garments; twenty necklaces; twenty balls of musk, and twenty dishes of ambergris; with a hundred male slaves, and as many female; and thus he spoke:

“ Shall others congratulate thee? but I will never
“ cease to felicitate thee. O Knight of Knights, in
“ the day of horrors thou art the lion, and the van-
“ quisher of the brave. The chiefs have accorded
“ thee the inheritance of eloquence; 'tis well, for
“ thou art wiser than Sohban* himself: accept these
“ presents of one bound in gratitude to thee, O thou
“ my refuge, my crown, and my defender!”

Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank. Then sprang forward Moshajaa, Chief of the tribe of Khoolan, and presenting a thousand horses, with all their accoutrements, and four thousand he and she camels; ten thousand sheep; ten silk cushions; a hundred velvet robes; fifty balls of musk, and fifty dishes of ambergris—he requested his acceptance, and thus addressed him:

“ Hail to thy hand, that has no bounds! . Prose
“ and rhyme fail to express my thanks. How can

* A king celebrated for his wisdom.

“gratitude be conveyed to the noble hero, when the
“Pisces and the Lyra fall short of it? He pos-
“sesses those virtues of liberality, could I describe
“them, the age would be adorned, and fortune
“would boast thereof. His fingers are the dew, and
“his munificence the falling shower: his virtues a
“garden, and his words flowers. Rejoice in the
“happiness that may bring thee glory; and nuptials
“that may produce festivity and triumph! Accept,
“then, I beseech thee, of me, this present; and ex-
“tend thy pardon, my lord, for its insufficiency.”

Antar accepted his presents, and seated him according to his rank; when up sprang the Chief Obad, and presenting five hundred horses with their housings and armour; three thousand he and she camels; five thousand goats; two thousand sheep; two hundred dishes of ambergris; two hundred balls of precious musk, and a thousand robes of crimson silk; with one hundred male slaves, and as many female; he thus expressed his admiration of Antar:

“Is there for judgment any justice-throne but
“thine? Beyond thy court is there any hope amongst
“man? Had a man wished to express praise or
“gratitude before this, rhymes would have failed.
“O, by the Lord of Heaven, were all languages to
“be heaped together, poetry would fall short of
“what I feel. Thou art the man, were it not for
“whose sword, there would be no refuge for the
“hopes of mortals. Marriage is noble among men,
“and truly in thee is proved what futurity will never
“produce. Thy success is peculiarly thine own;

“no scene of glory is there, but thine arm was there
“seen extended—munificence, resolution, and con-
“vincing wisdom! What is the ram? or the lion?
“or the sword? the hero of horsemen, when the
“armies close; the lion of armies, when the armies
“close. As to his virtues, their liberality every pe-
“titioner has witnessed; but on the day of battle;
“they are absynth. He protects those who beg
“his mercy; his benignity enriches before they even
“ask. Accept then the presents of one, who is come
“to thee in joy—whose power truly depends on
“thee. Never will I praise any one but thee; for
“in the qualities of thy glory I shall cite proverbs
“among men. O thou, my friend, my associate!
“may nothing ever disturb or taint thy happiness!”

Antar expressed his thanks, and congratulated him, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank. Then came forward Niamet, son of Ashtar, who presented a thousand horses, with their accoutrements and armour; and a hundred necklaces of jewels, and a thousand crimson silk robes; five thousand he and she camels; twenty thousand sheep; two hundred male slaves, and as many female; one hundred balls of precious musk; one hundred dishes of ambergris. And as he requested Antar's acceptance, he thus honoured him:

“To describe thee would require all we can say
“or write. It is no wonder that we are prolix or
“flowery. Thy deeds and thy greatness must ever
“be known: why should we not detail thy eulogy,
“and compose verses on thee? If indeed there be

“no end to words, there is also no term to thy virtues. Should glory itself aim at thy height, exceeding the distance of the stars, it might approach thee; and should it not reach so high, thou hast attained that supremacy we cannot describe, however we extend our expressions and our rhymes. Man is totally unable to praise the worth of a hero, who puts at nought every eulogist, and every admirer. As to his actions, his bounty to his foes is cited from east to west. Pens of spears have inscribed his generosity, and tongues of Indian swords have spoken of him in the East. His scimitar has raised him to a pinnacle of glory, on the very extremity of fame, far and near. He rides a high-mettled steed that never falters, and deals out death to the enemy. May this marriage be auspicious to thee, thou Knight of war, and mayst thou succeed in every attempt! May the world be ever a garden under thy command, and by thy bounty may it be refreshed with showers! Accepted from me a present that I offer thee, for thou art skilled and daring in every deed. May thy existence never fail us! thou art our object, and we consider thy generosity as the utmost boundary of our wishes.”

The heroes and warriors were much delighted. Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank.

Now when all the Arab chiefs had presented their offerings, each according to his circumstances, Antar rose, and called out to Mocri-ul-wahsh; O Knight

of Syria, said he, let all the he and she camels, high priced horses, and all the various rarities I have received this day, be a present from me to you. But the perfumes of ambergris, and fragrant musk, belong to my cousin Ibla; and the slaves shall form my army and troops. (The number of slaves Antar received that day amounted to two thousand five hundred; to whom he gave as many horses, and as many damsels, and also arms and weapons; and they all mounted when he rode out, and halted when he halted.)

When the Arab chiefs heard Antar's harangue, and how he had given away all his property, they marvelled at his generosity; and they requested him to terminate his nuptials, fearful of any treachery or opposition. O Arabs, said King Cais, your earnestness shall not be thrown away upon us, nor your visit to us be unavailing; for ye are the horsemen of magnanimity, and joy should ever succeed to difficulties. It was the justice of fortune that released Antar from the bonds of servitude, and endued him with liberality, intrepidity, and boldness in arms; and he is become our champion, and the remover of all our pains and sorrows.

Rebia was highly indignant at this speech; and as King Cais observed him, O Rebia, he added, verily Antar deserves even more than this, for he has been patient, and has never failed us; he has protected our wives and our families; and there is nothing to be done but to conclude the marriage.

And when the Arabs heard this, they kissed the

ground before him. Bravo ! exclaimed Antar, springing forward from behind them. All ye that are present here, know that I am the slave of this Absian tribe ; I will redeem it with my life and my property from every distress, and every calamity ; from every misfortune and every adversity : if they marry my cousin to me, I consent ; if they still resist, I will have patience ; if they wish to delay me, it is for them to command ; but whatever they do, I shall still be the object of insult and envy. O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed they all, there is no opposition to the nuptials—thou art our knight and our champion. Upon which Antar ordered ten thousand he and she camels to be slaughtered that day, and also twenty thousand sheep, and twenty thousand goats, and a thousand lions and lionesses.

Then mounted the Chief Bostam, with the tribe of Shibān, and the Chief Hajar, with the people of Kendeh ; and Maadi Kereb, with the tribe of Zebeed ; and Moshajaa, with the tribe of Khoolan ; and Hatal, with the tribe of Ghiftan ; and also King Cais, with the tribe of Abs and Adnan ; and Hassan, the Mazinite ; and Rowdhah, son of Meneea ; and King Niamet, son of Ashtar ; and Rebia, son of Zeead ; and also all the horsemen : and the whole desert was illumined with the flash of helmets, and armour, and corslets. They gave the bridles to their horses, and tilted and jousted with each other with barbless spears, till mid-day. (It was now the season of the spring, and the country was enamelled with the lustre of the new-born flowerets.)

And the sun being risen to the meridian vault of heaven, the warriors returned to their tents and the dwellings that were fixed for them : there the dinner was already served up for them, and there was not one but found before him a portion of the lion's flesh, of which the men ate till they were satisfied, and then came the wine-bearers round with cups and goblets.

Afterwards, Antar directed them to lay out a second range of tables, covered with victuals for the poor, and the orphans, and the widows. His orders were obeyed ; and the herald proclaimed, Whoever wants meat and provisions, let him repair to the kitchen of Antar, son of Shedad. So all the girls and boys, women and children, advanced ; and Antar stood up with his brothers, waiting on all the noble guests amongst the slaves and attendants : but King Cais prohibited Antar from serving in such menial offices.

Now there was a curious custom current among the Arabs at that period. The night on which a bridegroom should wed his wife, they brought a quantity of camel packsaddles, and heaped them one upon the other, decorating them with magnificent garments. Here they conducted the bride, and having seated her on high, they said to the bridegroom, Come on, now for thy bride ! And the bridegroom rushed forward to carry her off, whilst the youths of the tribe drawn up in line, right and left, with staves and stones in their hands, as soon as the bridegroom rushed forwards, began beating

and pelting him, and doing their utmost to prevent his reaching his wife. If a rib or so were broken in the affair, it was well for him ; were he killed, it was his destiny. But should he reach his wife in safety, the people quitted him, and no one attempted to approach him. (I inquired about this circumstance, says Asmaee, and what it was they were about. Asmaee, they answered, the meaning of this is to exhibit the bride to the warriors, that should her husband die, any one else might take a fancy to her, and take her off.)

At this period, as Antar's nuptials were began, King Cais assembled his brothers ; Know, sons of my father and my mother, said he, this night is the night of Ibla's appearing in state to Antar ; and I fear that some enemy of his may betray him : but this custom has prevailed for ages past. My opinion, said Harith, is, that this custom should be abolished with respect to Antar, and renewed with every one else.

King Cais saw the expediency of such advice, and accordingly ordered the herald to proclaim to the assembled nations, that King Cais, King of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, ordains that every one who attends Antar's nuptials with a sword, or staff, or any instrument, shall be put to death, and his property be given to Antar : and I will excuse, says the King, those who make offerings, and I will be impartial to those who take warning : for I have abolished this custom at the nuptials of Antar ; but I shall reinforce it on every future occasion. Thus

proclaimed the herald throughout the tents of the tribe of Abs and Adnan. The Arabs heard it, and all Antar's friends were exceedingly pleased at the precaution thus taken.

Now when Amarah heard that Antar was about to consummate his marriage with Ibla, he was seized with a violent fever, and an ague-fit suddenly fell upon his whole body. He sent for forty of his slaves, and exciting their avarice, ordered them to be on the watch the night of Ibla's marriage with Antar, that they should rush unawares upon him, and put him to death. They went away in order to execute Amarah's commands; but hearing the proclamations among the tents, that no one should attend Antar's wedding with arms, they returned, and told Amarah of the circumstance. Then his heart burst—he started up, and ran to his brother Rebia, exclaiming, O my brother, I am dying. What's the matter now, my fine fellow? said Rebia. Amarah related his disappointment; but added to Rebia, You have frequented the privacies of kings, and have travelled over lands and countries: so explain to me some deadly herb, that I may give it this slave in such a manner that no one may know any thing about it. Amarah, said Rebia, I know of an electuary, which one of King Numan's confidants explained to me, saying, Rebia, this is an electuary; should any one eat thereof, it will extinguish the burning warmth of his body; and, for one day and night, should it circulate through his frame, he will sink into a state of inanition and lethargy.

Brother, said Amarah, give me some of this electuary, that I may give it this black Antar to eat. And who will give it Antar to eat? said Rebia. My female slave Kehla, said Amarah; Khemisa, Ibla's handmaiden, is very fond of her, and this day, very early, she will go to assist her. Upon this Rebia gave Amarah the electuary, which he took, and returned home.

Now this slave-girl Kehla was in high favour with Amarah, for she was in lieu of Ibla to him, and when he came home he sent for her. Kehla, said he, I have an important affair for you, and I cannot trust its execution to any hands but yours. What's this mighty affair, my lord? said Kehla. I want you, continued Amarah, to take this electuary with you, when Khemisa invites you to the feast, and take special care to mix it with Antar's meat, that he may eat of it. But, my lord, said Kehla, what are the effects of this medicine, should any one eat it? It is not deadly? I should never escape out of the hands of the family of Carad. No, no! O Kehla, said Amarah, it is not deadly; it is a drug to excite hatred, and you well know what I have suffered on account of Ibla, and now at last Antar has got the better of me; he has taken her by force, and all my wish is, that he may eat this drug, so that he may hate her. Kehla expressed her obedience to his commands, and Amarah was all joy and delight, recommending her to keep the affair secret.

Kehla took the drug, and set out for Antar's

feast; and when she arrived, she saw one of the Carad slaves, called Naeem, standing in attendance amongst the other slaves; round his head was a crimson turban, and he wore one of Antar's honorary robes. Kehla was passionately in love with him; and when she saw him so fine, she said to herself, 'Tis true Amarah loves me, but he will not let me go out to the pastures and meet my beloved—he says this medicine is good to produce hatred, so the best thing I can do will be to give it my master, Amarah, himself to eat, that he may hate me, and let me go out to the pastures; and I will let Antar be happy. So she went to Khemisa, Ibla's hand-maiden, and related what had occurred with Amarah; and giving her the medicine, Khemisa, said she, there is nothing to be done but for you to infuse this drug into the meat, and take it to my master, Amarah; for he will not refuse it from your hands. Khemisa acquiesced, and taking the drug from her, put it into a platter full of meat, smothered with saffron and gravy; and having thus melted the drug in the meat, she carried away the dish, and went in search of the Chief Amarah, before whom she placed it. As soon as he saw Khemisa, he asked her about Kehla. My lord, she replied, I left her waiting on my master, Antar; and I have brought you this meat. Amarah was highly pleased, and said, Let not Kehla delay giving Antar the medicine to eat; and let the slave be a Black greasy Pot, as Rebia has said. And he ate up the whole meat; in the

excess of his joy licking the very dish with his tongue. However the meat was not long settled in his stomach before he felt the effects of the drug.

And now when the Arabs assembled for Antar's marriage had eaten their dinner, the cups of wine were brought round to them; the men and women were promiscuously moving together; the girls came forth, and the slave-women were amusing themselves, enjoying the happy moments. *Hola!* cried the matrons and the virgins, we will not remain covered on Antar's marriage. And they threw aside their veils, and the full moons appeared in all their lustre; and they flaunted the branches of their forms in the excess of their delight; and it was a famous day for them. By the faith of an Arab, said the matrons and virgins, we will not remain thus concealed behind these curtains; the doors shall not be shut upon us; we will see Ibla in her magnificence, and we will walk in her train, and make our offerings to her and Antar, and we will not keep a dirhem or a dinar to ourselves; for a happier night than this can never be, and no one but a madman would miss it.

When the women of the tribe of Carad heard this, they were alarmed for the scandal and censure that would thus be occasioned: so they resolved to finish Ibla's ceremony. They clothed her in the most magnificent robes and Chosroweean garments, and superb necklaces; they placed the coronet of Chosroe on her head, and tiaras round her forehead. Ibla was remarkable for her beauty and loveliness: the

firewomen surrounded her, and they requested Antar to let her come forth in state. He gave them permission, whilst his brothers and slaves stood round the pavilion with their swords, and javelins, and weapons. He ordered them to place a lofty throne for Ibla in front of the pavilion. They executed his commands—they lighted brilliant and scented candles before her, and spread afar the odour of aloes and camphor, and scattered the perfumes of ambergris and musk—the lights were fixed in candlesticks of gold and silver—the torches blazed—and whilst the women shouted and raised their voices to whistles and screams, Ibla came forth in state. In her hand she bore a drawn sword, whose lustre dazzled the eyesight. All present gave a shout; whilst the malicious and ill-natured cried aloud, What a pity that one so beautiful and fair should be wedded to one so black! As to the Chief Amarah, he felt that his life had quitted his body, and the universe appeared all darkened to him; he was stupefied, and in the greatest consternation; and though he wished to stand up, he fell down, for an arrow from Ibla's eyes shot him, and he was upset. I know, said he to himself, this black slave will be happy with Ibla; but I must put a stop to this business; so he ran home, and took two necklaces of jewels, and went with them to Simiah, Shedad's wife. O Simiah, said he, I have a particular favour to beg of you; I wish you would fulfil it, and take these two necklaces of jewels. What is it you want, my lord? said Simiah. What I want of you, said

Amarah, is to say to Zebbeebe, Antar's mother, God forbid you should do such an act, O Zebbeebe ! If she asks you what you mean by this speech, tell her, Your son Antar has endured much vexation ; but his trouble is not lost, for Ibla, after having been his foster-sister, is now become his wife. Zebbeebe is but of little wit, so she will perhaps tell her son Antar ; and should she say, I nursed Ibla with your milk, may be his high spirit will mount up, and he will not venture near his bride. Amarah's intention was to stop Antar's marriage that night, that the medicine might have its full effect upon him, ignorant, as he was, that the drug was in his own bowels. Simiah agreed to his proposal, for she much coveted the necklaces. Amarah departed, his heart full of joy. Simiah turned towards the pavilion, and met an immense concourse of people, all huddled one upon another. The candles were burning, and the torches were waving—Ibla came forth in state, looking about right and left, and as some one has described :

“ She exhibited the play of her charms in her features and her form, as her elegant shape moved about. She looked and shot arrows from her eyelashes, and threw amongst us penetrating darts. The beauties of her face exclaimed to her admirers, “ Be not ignorant, and attach yourselves to her charms. Every charm was united in her that could captivate the senses, when she either sat still “ or moved.”

When Ibla had appeared in state amongst the people, her mother took the sword out of her hand, and wished to dress her a second time; but fire and animation seized Antar; urged by his pride, he darted at Ibla, and snatched her off the throne of state like a sparrow, and entered the pavilion with her, leaving pain and regret in the hearts of all the bystanders: but Shiboob and Jareer remained at the door of the pavilion, protecting their brother from every harm.

Simiah, Shedad's wife, imparted to Zebeeba what Amarah had instructed her to say; and as Zebeeba was very deficient in sense, and not a little careless, she let her son alone till he had entered the tent with his cousin Ibla, when she went to him, and seating herself by his side, congratulated him on his marriage. O my son, said she, thanks be to God that thy trouble has not been thrown away, for Ibla, after having been thy sister, is become thy bride. But, my son, do not tell any one of this. At these words the light became dark in his eyes. What is this you say, my mother? he cried. Know, my son, said his mother, that I frequently suckled Ibla with thy milk. And why did you not inform me of this circumstance before now? asked Antar. Because, replied Zebeeba, I never thought you would obtain her. But now I tell you; so do as you please. And away she went. Antar was bewildered at the vicissitudes of fortune; he did not approach Ibla; but passed the night reflecting on the misfortunes directed against him from all quarters.

As to Amarah, he returned home, and sent for Kehla: when she came, he ordered her to bring him cups and goblets, which she did; and when he had drunk three cups of wine with her, and was caressing her, he fell almost senseless. Amarah was startled, and in despair; Surely, said he to her, you have not made any mistake with the drugs! What's that you say? cried Kehla; it is all your aversion for me that makes you speak thus: you saw Ibla this evening, and have been looking at her charms. Amarah remained doubtful, whether to believe it or not; sometimes talking of the drugs, and sometimes of the wine, till he perceived a lethargy come over his limbs and senses; and he was in a dreadful state of confusion.

As to Antar, he remained, as we said, till day dawned, when Ibla's mother came in, with the women of the Carad family, to congratulate her on her marriage, as was customary. They entered; but seeing her exceedingly distressed, her mother asked, What was the matter? O my mother, said Ibla, my cousin loves me not; and says he has heard something that must part us for ever.

At hearing this, her mother was greatly exasperated. She sent for Antar; What have you done here? cried she. You black! you cuckold! do you wish to make us a scandal among the Arabs? What has happened? What's the matter? my mistress, said Antar. You have taken my daughter by force, said Shereeha, and have kept off all suitors and lovers from her; and now she is yours, you have

cast her from your heart, and don't care about her. I desire you will tell me what this means, for never will I quit you till it is cleared up. I will take away my daughter, if you don't want her; but if you are a nasty greasy pot, I will put you on woman's clothes, and give you a hurdy-gurdy or a dulcimer, you filthy fellow! O my mistress, replied Antar, didst ever see any one approach his sister, or consider her as his wife? Who's your sister? said Shereeha. Ibla, replied Antar; and then he told her what his mother Zebeeba had related to him: Whither and how? cried Shereeha: I was not big with Ibla till you were ten years old, and you were constantly roaming about the wilds and mountains, tending camels and sheep; and she immediately sent for Antar's mother: Zebeeba, said she, hast thou at any time suckled Ibla with Antar's milk? I don't understand you; I know nothing about it, said Zebeeba. My mistress Simiah desired me to say all this to my son Antar. O my mistress, one night I was in a deal of trouble; I lay down, and I was terribly agitated about this sad affair: I was so confused that I said to myself, Which is tallest, I or my son? and when I stood by him, I perceived that I did not come up to his knees; then I thought he was my father, and that I was his daughter. When Ibla's mother and the other women heard this, they all laughed; but as Shereeha wished to know the truth of it, What could you mean by these suggestions? said she to Simiah; thus to disturb the happiness of my daughter and her

cousin ! O Shereeha, said Simiah, know then, that Amarah gave me this diamond necklace, and made me swear to instruct Zebeeba thus ; but though I was aware no one could possibly prove the fact, I could not reconcile myself to the loss of this necklace merely for a word or so, feeling assured that for this night my son would bear with me. Antar's countenance now brightened with joy, and his bosom expanded with delight. Away, then, said he to the women, you have finished your congratulations. He went to Ibla, and as he looked at her, he thought of Zebeeba's expressions, and all she had said to procrastinate his happiness, and thus he spoke :

" Zebeeba thought Ibla was her daughter ; Zebeeba lied, and she too who instructed her. Zebeeba is like the obscurity when it rises ; the night is in her, and is as if she were fraternised to it. But the sweet Ibla is like the morning, and her charms are pre-eminent. Who would draw a parallel between the owl and the dove ? and who would find fault with the sun at noon-day ? My mother came with a horrible story ; she came with an insidious falsehood in her speech."

When he had recited his verses, he quitted Ibla, scented as he was with musk and ambergris. The shouts arose, and the slave-girls whirled the cymbals in every direction ; but the happiest of all were King Cais and his brothers ; and as Antar came to him with the Arab chiefs, Cais congratulated him on his nuptials, as did every one else, kissing him

between the eyes. King Cais having invested him with an honorary robe, and also all the Arab chiefs present on the occasion of Antar's marriage, questioned him as to his heart's contentment. O, my lord, replied Antar, I have succeeded in obtaining my cousin only by your noble firmness, and the decision of your character; and thus Antar addressed him:

“ I swear by thee that I have passed a time of
“ happiness, and I enjoyed the most perfect delight
“ in her society till dawn. As Ibla lay, musk spread
“ delicious fragrance from her person, and her
“ breath to me is more delicious than oil of roses.
“ I kissed her bosom and her cheeks, ornamented
“ with precious jewels, and the flush of wine. I
“ grasped in her the branch of the tamarisk, steeped
“ in clouds of beauty from the distilling rain; she
“ leant on me with her hand, her elbow, and her
“ wrist. We were cheek to cheek and neck to neck.
“ Never did I behold amongst the human race any
“ thing like Ibla; lovelier and more beautiful than
“ the sun and moon. When she stirs, her graceful
“ movements resemble the wave of the branch with
“ its green leaves. O, I vow no other charms will
“ I ever love in my life; never, whilst the world
“ endures, will I ever fail in my fondness for her.
“ Ibla is indeed a matchless nymph; thin loined,
“ and delicate waisted. Love for her penetrates my
“ heart and my entrails: it is as if the tears that
“ flow down my cheeks should flow in blood. Away,
“ away, never will I forget her love; no, never till

"I rest in my grave. She is my object and desire in every desert; never will I abandon her till the day of judgment."

King Cais and all present were in admiration of his eloquence, saying, God be praised, that has endued thee with intrepidity and skill in arms, and fluency of speech! Thus they continued feasting and enjoying themselves for seven days successively, and after that the Arabs separated for their respective homes, surprised at the marriage, and the quantity of wealth expended at it.

When the Arabs were gone, the Absians remained two days quietly in their tents, but on the third day King Cais gave a splendid feast at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad to the tribe of Abs, in honour of Antar's nuptials; and when they had eaten their dinner, the wine circled among them, and as they were thus occupied, behold a dust like smoke arose. Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh mounted with the Absian chiefs to meet it, in order to see what it meant, and lo! it discovered a close-vizored knight, followed by ten thousand horsemen clad in armour and steel. This warrior was called Awtaban, son of Semaamaa, and the reason of his coming into the land of Abs was this: As he was on a predatory excursion against the property of the Arabs, he quitted the land of Yemen, his own country, and continued his expedition through the land of Cahatan, and entered the country of the tribes of Adnan, where meeting the Arabs who were separating from Antar's nuptials, he inquired about their movements,

and they told him all about Antar's marriage, and the wealth and cattle he had expended on that occasion. At this description of Antar, he was highly incensed and indignant, for he was also one of the famed giants in those days of ignorance. We must now proceed, said he to his heroes, to plunder the goods of the Absians, and kill their men, and slay Antar, whose name is thus famed and celebrated. I will take his cousin Ibla captive, and make her my concubine; and he hastened on till he came nigh unto the Absians.

When Antar saw the armies and horsemen, he turned towards the tribe of Abs to consult with them on what they should do in this affair. Beholding their countenances turn pale from fear, Cousins, said he, banish these terrors and alarms; comfort yourselves, and rejoice in the defeat of your foes; and he attacked in front of the Absians. Ibla, with the other women, came out to see what was going on; and as Antar beheld Ibla as she stood among the women without the tents, he was afraid she would look upon him with the eye of inferiority, so he rushed upon Awtaban's troops. Hola! O Arabs, he cried, tell me whence ye are, and what has brought ye hither? He had scarcely finished when Awtaban stood before him; Eh! black wretch, coward, poltroon, cried he, what slave of the tribe of Abs and Adnan art thou? Thou son of a base coward, said Antar, I am the vanquisher of heroes; I am he who enjoys with my sword the tribute of all these countries. I am the Chief An-

tar, son of the Chief Shedad. And I am come in quest of thee, said Awtaban in answer: this day I must slay thee, and take captive thy cousin Ibla; and if thou dost not know me, thou son of a poltroon, I am Awtaban, the knight of Yemen, and in my tribute are the lands of Senaa and Aden. He had not finished when Antar shouted at him and attacked. Awtaban met him, and addressed him in these lines:

“O Chief Antar, a hero has come against thee,
“whose power in the girded sword is to be dreaded:
“it cleaves the neck of the horsemen and the foe,
“and lays them low at every stroke. How many
“knights have I slain in the plain of battle, where
“they fall on their cheeks, and struggle with their
“hands! Come on, then; in me is an impetuous
“knight, whose ambition soars above every hero.”

May thy mother forfeit thee, and may thy family and tribe be deprived of thee! replied Antar. This day will I make the last of thy days; and he thus answered:

“Thou liest, by the shrine of God! thou most
“ignorant of men, thou son of a coward, thou
“vilest of wretches! Come on to the fight! Soon
“thou wilt meet a lion whose power is a match for
“every antagonist; whose Absian, Antarian vehemence overthrows the firmest of the foes with his
“mangling thrusts, and hurls down dead the warrior-enemy with his sword, and leaves them slain
“like camels gasping in death, abundant as carrion

“for the wild beasts—food for the birds of the deserts, and the hawks.”

Thus saying, Antar rushed upon Awtaban. Awtaban received him with a heart like a rock; and between them there ensued the battle of swords and spears, that turned infants grey, and sickened the eyes. They continued in this state, plying the sword-blow and the spear-thrust, till all the warriors shuddered at their exploits. Antar looked at Awtaban, and saw he was a mailed lion, and a terrific warrior. They continued to fight, to give and take, to sport, to exert themselves, to advance and retire, till Antar perceiving that Awtaban was exhausted and tired, hemmed him in, and clung to him; then closing every means of escape, he grasped his dreadful Dhami, irresistible and never-failing, and smote Awtaban on the head, covered as he was with his shield, but Antar's sword cut it in two, and cleft his helmet, and the chains, and the wadding, and still continued its sway till it issued through his thighs to the back of his horse, and Awtaban fell, he and his horse, cut in four; and at the effects of his blow he shouted out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! I will ever be the lover of Ibla. All the Absians gave an universal shout, May thy hand be never palsied! may no foe ever triumph over thee! may no one ever harm thee! thou knight of the age; thou champion of the tribe of Abs and Adnan!

As to Awtaban's troops, when they saw that Antar had felled their chief, they attacked with all

their ten thousand like one man, crying out, O thou black ! thou wretch ! thou coward ! thou poltroon ! thou hast slain a knight whose equal the age will never produce. Antar received them on the chest of his horse Abjer, whilst the Absians also assaulted to assist him ; men met men, and heroes heroes ; blood flowed and streamed ; limbs were hewn off ; the Absians exerted all their powers in the presence of their wives and families, and destroyed the foe with their force and vigour. As to Antar, he exposed himself to death and destruction, for he knew Ibla was looking at him. Mocri-ul-wahsh performed in the presence of Antar deeds to be recorded, and in less than two hours Awtaban's troops fled ; but the Absians and Antar pursued them closely, till having driven them out of the country, they returned to their scattered horses and dispersed armies ; and having collected their property, they went home, Antar at their head, as if drowned in a sea of blood ; and thus he spoke :

“ My heart is at rest ; it is recovered from its intoxication. Sleep has calmed my eyelids, and
 “ relieved them. Fortune has aided me, and my
 “ prosperity cleaves the veil of night, and the seven
 “ orders of heaven. I am the slave that encounters
 “ death on the day of terrors, and fears not destruction. I have slain Awtaban, and he was a knight
 “ stout armed and bitter palated ; I hurled him to
 “ the ground, laid low by my sword, his feet and
 “ legs wallowing in blood. I have made the horse-
 “ men drink of the cup of death mixed with tortures,

“ at my scimitar’s edge. I am the man from whom
“ they experience on the day of fears insufferable
“ justice: a youth that fells the horsemen on the
“ day of battle, and dreads not the thin edge of the
“ sabre. Ah! O Ibla, if thou hadst beheld my
“ deeds, and my thrusts with the straight spear,
“ thy love for me would increase, and thou wouldst
“ truly applaud my acts as long as people walk or
“ move on the earth. My glory is on high, in the
“ towers of the Pleiades, and my ambition rends the
“ seven ranges of heaven.”

When Antar had finished, the heroes and warriors were astonished at his eloquence; they retired home, and dividing the horses and the spoil amongst the horsemen, they renewed their feasts, and entertainments, and sports, at the lake of Zat ul irsad and the purling streams, the slave-women beating the cymbals, and the men flourishing their swords.

THE END.

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